A SERIES OF

LETTERS

ADDRESSED TO THE

GREATEST POLITICIAN

IN ENGLAND:

CONTAINING

A Deſcription of ſeveral Public Characters; a Defence of Sir GEORGE SAVILLE; and of Lord CHATHAM's Political Sentiments, and his upright, ſpirited, and conſtitutional Syſtem, contraſting it with that, firſt formed by Lord BUTE, and ſince completed by Lord NORTH.

The Public from its own Diſtreſſes, and the MINISTER's Smiles, will decide how far they are illuſtrated in the following Lines:

The Harlot ſees, our eaſy Faith beguiles,
And threatens Danger moſt when moſt ſhe ſmiles.

LONDON:

SOLD BY MESS. ALMON AND DEBRETT, OPPOSITE BURLINGTON-HOUSE, PICCADILLY;
AND
WILLIAM RICHARDSON, OPPOSITE SALISBURY-STREET, STRAND. 1780.

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TO THE

GREATEST POLITICIAN IN ENGLAND.

THE great and uncommon merit of which you are happily poſſeſſed, incite in me the utmoſt zeal to obtain and gratitude to acknowledge your indulgence. I will, therefore, ſolicit in terms leſs partial, yet as ſincere, as dedications generally are. I mean to ſingle out none for birth and fortune, but having the field open to all competitors, leave the rank to be ſettled by the fancy and good opinion of each: peers, members, freeholders, or ſcot and lot. Ladies of St. James's, or St. Giles's, I am happy to do juſtice to your political knowledge and eloquence, and claim no other merit, than that of doing homage to yours. If other dedications have appeared to exhauſt the powers of panegyric, eclipſing the very character they meant to brighten, I flatter myſelf the Hero or Heroine of my dedication will want nei-

ther elogium or beauty of language, to grace and adorn, to ſet to advantage, and enforce reſpect. As long as ſelf can plead its own cauſe, ſo long will no rational mirror be wanting to exhibit the brilliancy of him or her, whoſe protection I ſolicit, of the following letters. I am conſcious of the errors of expreſſion, which muſt be contained in a production which comes from a heart warm and zealous in the cauſe of liberty, and employed with greater attention to truth and virtue, than to the nicety of language and ſubtilty of expreſſion. But I hope to find favour from the champion to whoſe protection I ſubmit myſelf, and to have errors excuſed, if truth and juſtice appear to flow in my pen. Nor can I be fearful of the tribe of critics, when I go into the world of politics, ſo ably ſupported by one, whoſe omnipotence is much ſuperior to that of the oracles of the old unchriſtian world, though they could do any thing but juſtice to God. I claim the protection of him, who is infinite—I beg pardon, Ladies, for once, I'll change the gender, or leave it to your own fancies, and will not exclude the very hermaphrodite it. Modern and antient hiſtory ſhews, that ladies can maintain the dignity of the cabinet—in the proudeſt page of

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the Engliſh, Queen Elizabeth ſtands firſt, and though the delicacy of her ſex did not permit her to wear a ſword, yet ſhe knew what was requiſite to fix it in the ſcabbard. Ladies, once more exert your political powers; and, in time reflect, if the Armada was formidable, the loſs of Spaniſh wool, the ſtaple of modern beauty, is ſtill more ſo. Reflect, that the French ſtill poſſeſs the African ſettlements. Will you permit oſtrich feathers to be ſcarce, and wanted by you, who are as much intitled to levity as that nation can poſſibly be? Attack your enemies at their own weapons—this is the ſummit of political wiſdom.

Ye philoſophers, however cold, and given to ſingularity, can you deny, that without the co-operation of the fair ſex, all the ſtruggles of man would be ineffectual? Seed time and harveſt time would only ſhew the wantonneſs of unproductive fancy. Then, Ladies, exert yourſelves, and ſuffer not the character of the greateſt politician to be arrogated by cold Ruſſia or imperial Germany. The critical moment is ſometimes too ſoon over. Remember this, and aſſociate in every county. England wants union, it wants increaſe. To increaſe has been always the favourite command of God; by obeying that command, ſupport the

honour

honour of England, and claim the moſt reſpectable rank in politics. Raiſe the feeble, and animate the moſt inſipid Maccaroni. Attack the critics, and beat them, if not in the tenſes, at leaſt in the modes—from the conjunctive to the potential. By this manœuvre of the modes, the miniſter has baffled the petitions of the people, and, Ladies, after a fiery trial, he ſtill ſtands it. Ye critics, ſtand off—I repoſe in one whoſe ſhake of the head can make the ſheets of you all dull and joyleſs, in whom power is infinite, and time a ſpan.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I leave you to your own fancies; and, therefore, ye critics, go down to the mines of Cornwall, eſcape to the highlands of Scotland, my friend and champion is preſent.

From the coloſſal powers of Lady H. to the inſinuating eloquence of Mrs. Elizabeth Neale preſiding in her little ſenate of St. James's, I expect to find the friendly hand of the greateſt politician.

Under every denomination, from the honeſt and upright Sir George Saville to Mr. George Selwin, the independent candidate of Glouceſter, all claim the rank I am at preſent diſpoſed to give. Every man in his opinion, ſome for their own, and a few for the good of the whole,

whole, ſtand firſt in politics, and can ſettle the affairs of the nation, ſome over coffee, ſome claret, and not a few over the patriotic liquor of a good old Alderman's intire butt.

All are ready to ſerve their country—even the biſhops eat and conſume its productions, that are moſt luxurious and expreſſive.

All are ready and able to ſave a ſtate which they allow to be critically ſituated, all except the miniſter; for, he has confeſſed himſelf to want abilities to govern the nation. To all others, who have, what he has ſo repeatedly, not only by his own confeſſion, but conduct, proved himſelf to ſtand in need of. I leave the competition free and open, and conſcious of my own imperfections, I am happy to confide, where infallibility is ſo ſtrongly centered.

THE AUTHOR.

TO THE

PEOPLE

OF

ENGLAND.

LETTER I.

THE tears of an aged Advocate have forced pity from a boſom which has has hitherto been conſidered as inacceſſible to the ſmalleſt degree of compaſſion. This pitifulneſs would lead me into a large field, were I to indulge my pen with a comment on thoſe paſſions, which frequently unite to impreſs an appearance of ſympathy on the features, whilſt the heart is feaſting on cruelty: but I will reſtrain my pen from a melancholy diſcuſſion, which might diſcloſe, if poſſible, more than what is already

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ſeen or felt, and content myſelf with aſking, under hæ lacrymæ, and for what purpoſes, they have been directed to flow and water the flowers of eloquence? Did they proceed from a ſympathy of the conſtitution, the loſs of ſome, and diſtreſs of other Colonies, for the blood ſpilt in America, or for ſome leſs popular cauſes; among others for the loſs of thoſe notes which were lately conſumed, thoſe valuable notes which were full of the moſt learned advice and moſt unerring rules of reſcuing, if not the family, yet at leaſt thoſe principles which they ſtruggled to the hour of abdication, to preſerve. The Sinonian force of theſe tears compelled the ſacred manſion to open its gates and receive the great ſufferer, the man of ſorrow, the counſellor. They have done more than the united force of hoſtility has been ever able to atchieve, they have not only gained a victory, but brought the people to return thanks for the means which worked this defeat: the tears of the aged counſellor have had more efficacy in diſſolving, than the vinegar of Hannibal; they have melted a rock which bid defiance to every former exertion, conceived in prayer, petition, or remonſtrance.

The precious drop of a Murray is regarded as the firſt drop of a diadem; it will be preſerved, and ſucceeding Tories will

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tell and rejoice to propagate its marvellous effects, which, among others, ſtand firſt in point of diſgrace and calamity to England. That the tear of an elderly Scotch Advocate were able to enter the nervous ſyſtem of a whole people, which being ſo affected, loſt all ſpirit and energy.

Manly remonſtrances in the City were changed for adulating addreſſes; complaints againſt a wicked Miniſter ceaſed, a noble ſpirit of aſſociating, to preſerve the manly attributes of reaſon, and the beauty of the Engliſh conſtitution, gave way to aſtoniſhment artfully raiſed.

Theſe tears, like a ſecond deluge, brought into the veſſel of ſtate animals of different natures, originally hoſtile to each other, and keeping them from following the bias of their former habits, prevailed on them to reſt ſatisfied, that the ſame power which had preſerved that veſſel in the late dreadful inundation of licentiouſneſs, would ſend a dove of peace, to ſhew the foundation on which a ſucceeding generation ſhould fix and derive law and ſupport. May that Dove be different from the dove of the late peace.—May the law and that ſupport be any other than martial law, the engine of deſpotiſm, or a ſtanding army, the canker of liberty.

Hitherto the Engliſh could ſay, Old Ocean is our ſafe-guard, ſo garriſoned by

this boundary of nature, could bid defiance to little lurking enemies, or combined fleets of the moſt open and envenomed; but the Lion of that once beſt of protectors has given way to the Attic ſalt of an Advocate's tears, and is no longer a ſafe-guard; for, whilſt England has boaſted of its ſecurity from external, it has found an enemy much more envenomed, in its own boſom; when ſuch is the ſucceſs of the learned and inſidious Advocate, what ſympathy can the Engliſh conſtitution, he has ſo long been undermining, expect to receive?

This conſideration induced me to make ſome obſervation on his Lordſhip's ſteadineſs to the cauſe he has, againſt the efforts of a Chatham and the pen of a Junius, defended hitherto with perſeverance, but at laſt with ſucceſs. And I ſhall conclude with a compariſon of it to that of the ſerpent in the Fable, which is as follows:

God gave man, on creating him, a drug, which would preſerve health and long life; but man truſting this divine preſent to an aſs, and he on the road thirſting, was prevailed on by a ſerpent to go to a neighbouring ſtream to quench his thirſt, and to confide his burden to the ſerpent, who by this art gained the valuable preſent. Thus it was that man by his negligence loſt, and the

the ſerpent by his ſubtilty acquired, immortality.

Engliſhmen, I leave you to make the application at this critical moment, when ſo many complain of their loads of debts, but thirſting, are apt, on the day of temptation, to leave their all to a ſerpent.

☞ Lord Bute, the Dove of the laſt peace.

LETTER

LETTER II.

MR. Pitt during his adminiſtration, by his integrity of conduct, not only attached the confidence of the people of England, but gained the general reſpect of Europe and all foreigners of ſagacity and ſentiment; among others Mr. Beaumarchais, than whom England cannot have a more inveterate enemy, has allowed Mr. Pitt a place among the greateſt of ſtateſmen, and even his death was lamented by thoſe who knew it was a blow their rivals would feel to the quick; nor ſhould this applauſe be wondered at, when we conſider that the Patriot has left it as a valuable legacy to the univerſe, that an independent miniſter has the moſt deciſive advantages over one who acts under an arbitrary power; that commerce and liberty have an aſcendancy over the glittering pomp of monarchy, deprived of thoſe reſources of treaſure and ſpirit which flow from one, and derive its energy from the other.

To return to England, and to the advantages derived from Mr. Pitt's adminiſtration. His good ſenſe and ſpirit leſſened the calamities of war, tho' however united, they could not totally remove them; yet in the midſt of it your Colonies were ſafe, your trade flouriſh-

flouriſhing, and inſurance, which is the life of it, was not to be felt. The name of Engliſhman began to be a term of reſpect in every part of the world. The war was the moſt deciſive to be met with in the annals of hiſtory; and the fruits of it might have been preſerved for ages. Levity could no longer flatter the French, nor moroſity ſupply the want of ſpirit in the Spaniard. Neither hope was left to ſoothe diſtreſs, nor ſtratagem able to point out to either, ſuch a ſyſtem as could reſiſt Mr. Pitt and victory. Let us here ſtop for a moment, and take a view of thoſe objects England had reaſon to form from an atmoſphere ſo ſerene, ſo favourable to hope and imagination. What a harveſt of riches from commerce with America, what content under every man's fig-tree! In the midſt of this contemplation, it ſeems impoſſible that a ſingle individual ſhould riſe up like a vapour, and eclipſe theſe glorious objects. A man not recommended to favour by abilities or ſervices; a man who had reſided ſo long abroad, that the force of habit added to the influence of birth to make him unworthy of confidence. However, the miſchief was wantonly done in the dark, and if we quit the field of metaphor, we ſhall ſee that reality has been more profuſe in diſtraction than the moſt expreſſive tragedy could have been in deſcription. The

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honeſt Miniſter was diſmiſſed from the ſervice of his country, and Lord Bute clapped into power, to rule a ſtate from which his anceſtors had been driven, as moſt obnoxious to its liberty.

This was done, and the People of England acquieſced: not a ſingle remonſtrance was preſented to expreſs thoſe fears, every man of common ſenſe began to harbour from ſuch a revolution in favour of the Stuart family and principles. The Lion of England was lulled, the Butean Miniſtry ſaw the advantage of this circumſtance; it trampled upon the glory acquired in a moſt ſucceſsful war, it triumphed over the bitter draught that was poured into the throat of England, when the balm of peace was expected. That man ſtill exiſts, who originally dared to act this tragical part, as he does now continue to play off the actors his perfidy has left on the ſtage. The moment is arrived when every Engliſhman ſhould join, and vivâ voce ſupport the majeſty of the kingdom, which has been ſo cruelly treated.

LETTER III.

A FIRST Lord of real merit in the Treaſury is like the leading fiddle in a concert; his acknowledged abilities rule the motions, and command the very looks of the reſt of the band. From ſuch ſuperiority of character Mr. Pitt, during his miniſtry, diffuſed into every apartment of office the ſpirit of harmony. The whole power of England was exerted for its welfare and honour. No complaints of inactivity in office, no joſtling, not a ſingle idea of venality or miniſterial intrigue appeared in the ſyſtem he adopted. The ſupport of borough intereſt, the creation of titles, the ſacrifice of purchaſed Members at levées, he conſidered as an indignity to the character of a Miniſter, and a proſtitution of the name of Engliſhman. Though the contraſt be painful, let us for a moment deſcend from Mr. Pitt's conduct, and take a view of Lord North's, and the effects of each will fix the merit due to the deceaſed, and the applauſe and eſteem the preſent Miniſter has fairly deſerved of the public. He has long preſided at the Treaſury, and directed its force; but for what purpoſes? to defend the blunders of ſome, the wickedneſs of others, and preſerve a union in venality. From the

black day Lord Bute ſnatched England from the fruits of a moſt glorious war, a ſyſtem of intrigue and venality followed him into power; and the miniſter who now ſhews ſuch a deſire to retain his place, was, from Lord Bute's acceſſion to office and oſtenſible power, conſtantly reſolved to adhere to him. When little clerks in office reſigned their employments, he remained untouched in point of ſenſibility, and conſequently an inſtrument in the hands of the favourite. At laſt, when Lord Rockingham was miniſter, his Lordſhip was diſmiſſed. During that interval, he went into the oppoſition; but when intereſt did not compel him, inclination never led him to engage in debate; but as ſoon as that upright miniſter was diſmiſſed, no bee was ever more cloſely fixed to a flower uncommonly delicious, than this young man was attached to that ſyſtem of black intrigue, Lord Bute found expedient to ſupport himſelf and principles. Queſtions that muſt be for ever held in abhorrence, were conſtantly ſupported by Lord North. He ſaw the road to preferment; and he early in the day, when the expulſion of Mr. Wilkes was to be accompliſhed, diſtinguiſhed himſelf by exerting the energy of his voice to cruſh the man who at that time was exceedingly obnoxious to the favourite, and whoſe downfall was the great object of the cabinet,

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as much ſo as the ſubjection of America has ſince been the point to which all its knowledge has been directed.

We cannot therefore be ſurprized, after viewing the under-graduate, to ſee ſo able a man in intrigue and miniſterial cunning, as Lord N—, not only in the treaſury, but wedded to its power and advantages; we cannot be ſurprized to ſee him full of joy to carry the queſtion of the day, though that very queſtion might involve one half of the kingdom in blood and perplexity. Of this kind of joy he has had a great ſhare, no attorney in Weſtminſter Hall has had a greater. Whatever might have been his ſucceſs in carrying the day againſt the helpleſs widow or youth ruined by Catorian uſury, or his aſſociates.

Gentlemen of that mercileſs temper and unfeeling principles are made not only obdurate by practice, but ſtill more ſo by the conduct of the miniſtry; for the latter feed the diſtreſſes of the public, as the former do on that of individuals. The public might complain and ſue for redreſs, but neither the attention nor compaſſion of the miniſter can be fixed or moved. He ſtill glories to hold the reins of Government, and drives on, axle-tree deep, through blood and miſery. The effuſion of the one, and ſufferings of other, are to be attributed to the miniſter as

much as to the favourite; becauſe being an Engliſhman by birth, he has gained your confidence, and by adopting the principles of him who is not, he has betrayed it.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

WHEN poſterity comes to that part of the preſent hiſtory, in which it will be related, that in the reign of George the Third, the Spaniſh were ſo hardy as to take off the rudder of an Engliſh ſhip of war at Falkland Iſland, the reader will naturally ſtop ſhort, and reflections ſimilar to the following will probably ariſe in the minds of ſuch who previouſly had acquired a knowledge of the Engliſh nation.

The rudder of an Engliſh ſhip taken off, the whole kingdom took fire, the fleet was the embaſſador deputed to wipe off ſo black a diſgrace to its reputation, and ſo intolerable to the temper of the Lord of the ocean. The miniſter, for the time, exerted his great talents, which were equalled by his ſenſibility; from which he was ſo animated, as to take the moſt vigorous meaſures, which cruſhed one half of the Bourbon Family, and humbled the other. He made alliances with every court, and appointed to each, men moſt able to diſcharge that important function; who were ſo well ſupported by his ſound policy in the cabinet, that the Engliſh gained an aſcendancy over its enemies, and preſerved the balance of power.

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The freedom of the City of London was preſented to the miniſter in an oak box; he was thanked from the great and affluent county of York to the extremities of the kingdom. Addreſſes of thanks crowded St. James's, to expreſs what was due in gratitude to his Majeſty for ſupporting ſo honeſt and able a ſervant of the public. All Europe was convinced, that in an affair touching the honour of England,—to temporize is to proſtitute, to ſuſpend is to annul its character.

Lord North, ſenſible of theſe truths, made this premature attack on its naval character, the means of eſtabliſhing it beyond the reach of its enemies: and this attempt to feel the pulſe of the miniſter proved an indication of his ſpirit and attachment to his country. So far imagination might be indulged, from the hiſtory of men and events preceding the fatal period of his Lordſhip's miniſtry. Here imagination will be humbled to the duſt; here commences a freſh revolution; the inſolence offered to the Britiſh flag in his adminiſtration was made the ſubject of ſome pompous harangues; the people were alarmed, and during that interval, many thouſands were taken out of their pockets; but the diſgrace was not wiped off. And though it was eaſy to have done it, and to have healed the wound by a remedy moſt

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ſpecific; yet it was only ſkinned over, and additional pangs, if not utter deſtruction, were reſerved for a ſucceeding day. The nation was ſtruck with diſmay, as it has been ſince loſt in venality. The reſt of Europe drawing opinions from this Falkland Iſland affair, both of the genius of the miniſter, and his influence in the cabinet, formed that collected maſs of contempt and rivalſhip, which are held out by their preſent declarations as a proof of the loſs of the balance of power in Lord North's miniſtry, which was in Mr. Pitt's fixed and undiſputed in favour of the Engliſh.

This ſingle event is ſufficient to form the contraſt between the two miniſters, and poſterity muſt ſee in it a melancholy diſparity, produced in the ſame nation, and in a ſhort ſpace of time: when this treachery in the miniſter is conſidered as it ought to be, his advocates will be unable to defend him from arguments derived from rebellious America, or wicked oppoſition; the former was then, like the other, little inclined to obſtruct the miniſter in his operations. The ſky was apparently ſerene, and he floated with a ſecure boſom. Next in conſequence to this event, during that ſeaſon of tranquillity, I place to Lord North's account, the oppoſition he formed to a motion made by Mr. C———ll, and

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ſeconded by Mr. W——s, which was to reduce the naval expences to a ſpecific arrangement, and to remove from that bulwark of the nation all impoſition in office, and to clear from it men who were employed not for the eſſential purpoſes of the navy, but thoſe of election influence only. The miniſter as a financier had upon this occaſion a fair opportunity of exerting his talents as ſuch. He was conſcious he had them not, or he did not chuſe to exert them; and this great and ſalutary queſtion reſpecting the navy was loſt, and a ſeaſon ſo favourable for its being fixed on principles moſt ſolid and regular, was ſuffered to evaporate. Still ſome enchanted diſputants continue to give the miniſter the merit of a great financier: becauſe he has dominion, and ſtill wantonly exerciſes it, over the purſe of the nation; can ſqueeze from it a ſupply, and ways and means are found out by his brokers to pay the intereſt of new loans. But is this merit able to fill the ſails of ambition? is it not humbled in a moment, when we reflect how Lord L———, without any knowledge of figures at all, ruled the Exchequer with eaſe, and carried every queſtion propoſed to bring money into that repoſitory of voted millions? He acquitted his charge with eaſe, becauſe he poſſeſſed only a favourite unit. And whilſt the preſent Chancellor

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of the Exchequer poſſeſſes that unit, he will go on, till ſome black cataſtrophy cloſes the period. Then Lord Chatham's atchievements, which have enriched the records of the Engliſh nation, will be once more brought out to recollection, and reſpected at St. James's, when diſgrace will effect what conviction could not do. Then his Majeſty will change that aſtoniſhment, which he once expreſſed of the City of London, for ſpeaking truth and affection, for aſtoniſhment at the miniſter for acting with neither.

☞ Mr. Cornwall and Williams.

LETTER V.

To the Univerſities of England.

WERE I to attempt to add to the ſtores of learning you poſſeſs, I ſhould be juſtly called preſumptuous; and I ſhould be deſerving of an imputation ſtill more odious, were I to attempt to provoke a ſpirit of controverſy, when a union of council becomes neceſſary to promote thoſe plans of reformation, which all men agree, are eſſential to the honour and ſalvation of the kingdom; may I then take the liberty to requeſt of you to quit the attic ſtory of metaphyſics, and for a moment ſtand on the plain but ſolid ground of common ſenſe.

From hence you may perceive, that the co-operation of honeſt men is eſſential to ſtop the tide of venality, which threatens a general deluge; and the great and endearing rights the Univerſities enjoy from the conſtitution, are very ample to animate them in proportion, as their knowledge and learning combine to diſpel the clouds of doubt and myſtery, and expoſe the firſt cauſes of the preſent perplexity in England, clear to the loweſt undergraduate. Conſidering, that as the mortmain act, jealous of even the learned

learned bodies, from an increaſe of men ſupported by incomes, which were interpreted as ſinecures, and therefore dangerous, has included them in its reſtrictions. Arguments of the utmoſt force and ſpirit might be brought by the Univerſities in their turn, againſt ſinecures-men, who have not a ſingle colour of recommendation to keep and hold places ſo burthenſome to the public, and ſo conducive of power in a miniſter, becoming by ſuch a formidable ally to prerogative, and dangerous to liberty, the alma mater of ſcience and learning; the ſons of which ſhould unite to protect it, and like virtuous children, ſtand in the gap and be more active, becauſe being more capable of forming inferences of the danger to which they will fall the firſt victims, ſhould the influence which is now the object of national fear and conteſt be continued.

This influence is not only viſible to ourſelves, but even the courts of our enemies are apprized of it, and build all their hopes of reducing England on that foundation. The Univerſities, in their common habits of reaſoning, are uſed to couple cauſes and effects together: therefore, they cannot in the preſent ſituation of England, be at a loſs to trace the former, and ſhould confederate to ſtop their unhappy tendencies, before they might become irreſiſtible.

To ſuppoſe you neutral at this juncture, would be to ſuſpect you of more inſenſibility than the dull plodding Hollander. Nor yet can it be imagined, that you ſecretly wiſh deſtruction to independency, and the preſent ſupporters of it: for this would incorporate you with the wretches who prefer the plunder to the ſalvation of a ſtate, ſlavery to the pains of avoiding it.

If this picture is horrid, what muſt be the reality to minds poliſhed by education? how muſt they ſhudder to ſee men fall at the ſhrine of venality! men of the firſt families, and as obedient to the miniſter, as the meaneſt and moſt uneducated contractor. Each becoming, under his influence, callous in every part, but the palm of the hand: as this becomes more ſenſible by being tickled and gratified, the miniſter finds his way to the heart, and when once he has gained that paſſage, by the touch, he commands the whole man, as Angelo would one of his horſes, obedient to his ſpur, and ready to go backward or forward.

Eloquence becomes incapable of entering the heart, reaſon unable to controul the underſtanding; the miniſter laughs at both, is ſecure of his numbers, and falls into that profundity of repoſe in which his picture is drawn, faſt and happy, whilſt the nation is ſliding down hill, a precipice on each ſide.

ſide. The ſame ſtate opiate that lulls him, lulls his brother placemen. And the cries of widows and orphans are like ſo many zephyrs in their impenetrable ears.

From this depravity in the morals of the high and exalted in power, too apparent in moſt countries, ſome of the moſt able writers have given a more virtuous and pleaſing character of the wild Indian, than the man of refined knowledge. Before the cock crows the univerſities of England ſhould rouze their endeavours to reſcue the ſacred rights of the underſtanding, and ſet an example to thoſe melancholy Colleges in arbitrary ſtates of ſupporting independency, the firſt ſpring of ſcience and human majeſty.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

To JOHN WILKES, *Eſq.*

THE value of a friend is frequently not known, but by the loſs of him; and this Proverb has been verified, not only in regard to individuals, but ſtates moſt celebrated in hiſtory. How many inſtances do we find in every page, of inſenſibility having prevailed till death, or loſs rendered irreparable by neglect, has by touching it given to the deceaſed applauſe and approbation; though during a life capable of having rendered ſervices moſt eſſential, confidence had been refuſed or controlled, by ſome little jealouſy. But, Sir, you have been doubly happy; in the firſt place, to have ſerved your country; and ſecondly, to have received of it marks of eſteem and moſt cordial approbation: inſomuch, that in the county and city of Middleſex, you have convinced the miniſter, that the people can be ſteady, when their leader in political ſtruggles has good ſenſe and fortitude to frame and execute plans for the public ſervice.

The eyes of the public are now fixed, where their confidence has been long repoſed.

poſed. They look upon you as a man, who ought to animate a cauſe that becomes more important, as the miniſter's plot begins to thicken, and threaten miſchief and perplexity to the pillow of every claſs of the people, at leaſt out of the liſt of placemen and penſioners.

Sir, you are called upon to exert your influence, and ſpare no pains to animate your fellow citizens to petition and remonſtrate againſt the preſent miniſter's conduct, and the diſgrace and calamity aiſing from it. Your endeavours to promote a meaſure, the exiſtence of the ſtate, makes neceſſary, will be ultimately crowned with ſucceſs; and honour will follow every ſtep taken by their friend and champion. Your patriotiſm has given life and ſoul to the cauſe of liberty in Middleſex, and diſtinguiſhed the Electors of that opulent county with a kindred zeal and affection, for that valuable and moſt endearing of all the attributes of the human underſtanding.

In this county, the electors have added majeſty to the people, and by a conduct moſt pure, though their ſituation has been ſo near the court, by an ardour moſt intereſted, though they live in an age of venality, they have given freſh ſupport to a conſtitution which began to ſtagger, and beauty

where

where time had fixed an appearance of decay.

From Middleſex other counties muſt by degrees receive ſome ſparks of this animating principle of liberty; and the influence of it might prevail ſtill ſtronger, and from Brentford paſs the water, fix in the moſt frozen boſom, and penetrate the moſt obdurate. Happy effects to be wiſhed for at this critical moment, when Engliſhmen have ſeen their coaſts inſulted, and their moſt important harbour left to the mercy of an enemy.

When this inſult was offered, and no ſigns appeared of any inclination in the miniſtry to avenge it, the cry was ſtrong in the mouths of every independent man—Treachery in the miniſtry. The axe was prepared to level the trees of Mount Edgecomb, a juſt puniſhment to the proprietor, who had quitted the line of liberty, and devoted himſelf to a corrupt miniſter. He muſt at this inſtant have felt what all mercenary men ſhould feel ſooner or later, the remorſe of deſerting the firſt principle of happineſs, that of independency. And I'll venture to ſay, he was not at that moment conſoled by the reflection of his having acquired three coats by his ſeceding from the friends of the revolution. To the blue belonging to the navy, the red was added, as Captain of the band of penſioners (a painful

ful ſight to the navy) and the third always beſtowed by the people on thoſe who change their public conduct for motives of a mercenary nature. However, we have ſeen thoſe ſtately trees in danger; venality has its puniſhment.

I beg pardon, Sir, for dwelling on objects ſeemingly little; but at preſent, whatever relates to venality, and the downfal of this great and once reſpected kingdom, ſhould be expoſed to full view. From little to great objects you are alternately urged to force your fellow citizens to remonſtrate. For the the ſame cauſes that made Mount Edgecomb humble, might ſhake the proudeſt counting-houſe in London.

LETTER VII.

FROM the day Conſtantine's ambition led him to erect a capital in Byſantium, Rome fell a ſacrifice; for the new rival object of ſupremacy drew all his attention, and exhauſted his treaſure: the legions themſelves were at laſt employed to defend that diſtant object of his vanity, till this want of policy invited the Barbarians to invade Rome, and at the ſame time took from it the means of defence. Preciſely have late meaſures adopted in England reſembled thoſe which have left ſo many ruins in that celebrated city; ruins moſt inſtructive of the fatal conſequences, which plans of too extenſive an ambition have and will continue to produce.

America has been to England a ſecond Byſantium, it has been the viſionary object of power and dominion, whilſt all the care and attention due to the former has been ſuſpended, and regarded as inſignificant, becauſe to the good old ſovereignty of England the empire of America has not been added. Advice from the moſt experienced, facts moſt ſtriking, and ſufficient to change a ſyſtem ſo full of diſgrace and ruin, have been totally diſregarded, add in every pauſe during the

the American conteſt, ambition has been more inflamed, the more its luſt has been oppoſed by reaſon. Luſt has never been more encreaſed by cantharides than ambition has been heated, as the object of its gratification has appeared to be out of the reach of power and human attainment. At laſt the efforts of your moſt inveterate enemies in a manner compel you to fix your eyes on ſelf-preſervation. Though I am ready and happy to allow that whatever has been in the compaſs of human glory, Engliſh bravery has accompliſhed, when wiſdom and juſtice have actuated its force and exerted it on proper objects. Yet venality and diſtracted councils have defeated that national bravery, and brought the kingdom to gaſp for ever.

That this is your ſituation, no man, however plauſible, however diſpoſed to deceive the people, can deny or palliate. What then is left to be done? Conſult the conſtitution, and go down to the elementary principles of it. Every freeholder and citizen ſhould petition to change not the men only who rule, but the whole ſyſtem which during the preſent reign has been adopted and adhered to. A Patriot King might be ignorant of the deſires of his people, ſhould they ſhew an indifference in their temper, and be backward to convince him of their

ſuſpicion of treachery in his miniſtry. Paſt indifference can be cured by no other remedy than a ſteady and general exertion at the preſent moment; and this exertion ſhould be made in every mode moſt likely to conſole, though not capable totally to repair the loſs of America. The moment your petitions to his Majeſty can penetrate the royal boſom, you might expect relief and proſperity. The moment the ſoldier reſigns America to the merchant, he will make it again the ſource of beneficial commerce, though not of miniſterial venality. The merchant firſt cemented America to England; the ſoldier deſtroyed that cement, let therefore the firſt principles of attachment be again revived; petition, over and over, till this is obtained; ſober, regular trade, natural to both countries, will do more than all the ſoldiers the treaſury of England can pay for. That very trade, though little conducive to the future ſupport of a miniſter, or inſolence of office, will be more favourable to human happineſs, than the ſplendid ravages victory has raiſed in imagination however ſanguine; and had theſe Colonies, like the Romans, been left to miniſterial controul, the various places within the ſcope of that extenſive dominion, added to the influence of the Eaſt-Indies, would have made the miniſter paramount to every idea of oppoſing him; and the power

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of the people being reduced, as his would have increaſed, I cannot ſee but one meaſure in that caſe left for your choice, and though a melancholy one, yet not to be argued againſt, I mean a reſignation of the key of parliament to the ſovereign. This falls within a ſuppoſition, that America had been garbled according to the original plans; the preſent miniſter contended for plans ſo repugnant to every principle of common ſenſe, that every ſtruggle to ſupport them ſhews their impracticability. Weighing theſe conſiderations, the loſs of America as a Colony, is gain to liberty. From ſuch a loſs, however, not the ſmalleſt gratitude is due to the miniſter; for a quack, in applying the moſt poiſonous drugs, might hit on their antidote; but ignorance, though defeated, does not exempt him from general contempt.

LETTER

LETTER VIII.

To Lord BEAUCHAMP.

HUMANITY and bravery have formed an union of ſentiment that has conſtantly appeared, as manners have received a poliſh from the arts and refinement from ſcience. To the great protectors of both, the Romans, we are indebted to the preſent day for ſtrong and indiſputable teſtimonies, which they have left of their having cheriſhed that amiable union by a reward allotted to every man who had ſaved the life of a fellow creature. The reward was a civic crown, which was given as long as the commonwealth exiſted.

Though that honour is now no longer conveyed in the civic crown, yet it is ſupplied by one much ſuperior in conſequence, though not equal in oſtentation; I mean an unperiſhable honour and reward, given by Chriſtianity in the boſom of HIM with whom mercy is happineſs.

My Lord, you have diſtinguiſhed your conduct by making this attribute of Heaven an ingredient of it; and this I may, without flattery, aſſert and prove by your perſeverance to free the perſons, and relieve the diſtreſs

diſtreſs of thouſands: and though the aſſiſtance of popularity has been with-holden from your endeavours, your own ſenſibility has given you warmth and animation to proceed in your endeavours to accompliſh a point ſo eſſential to the liberty of England. And though unaſſiſted, your zeal has not permitted you to ſtop in the way; and the day will come, when gratitude will force through every impediment, and acknowledge the debt due to your manly and benevolent efforts, to give comfort to the diſtreſſed individual, and ſtrength to the public; by preſerving of thouſands, who probably would have periſhed in gaol, if left to the peſtilence of it, without the equity of perſonal redemption. To theſe thouſands may ſtill be added, who wander in foreign parts to avoid the miſery of a gaol; the horrors of which are ſo great, that many honeſt and worthy men, flattering themſelves with attempts to avoid it, enter into engagements with which they can never comply, and fall victims to uſury. So ſituated, and left to the mercy of the creditor, the King loſt his ſoldiers, and tender children their parents; and the law of God in its particular commands to increaſe and multiply, was viſibly oppoſed.

For ſuch immenſe power in the creditor, what can be urged as a plea? For what purpoſe can it be claimed? Frequently the

the anſwer is, For vengeance. And ought a legiſlature to look tamely on, and ſee this vulture prey on thouſands, and not give a hand to take it off from their vitals? Their diſtreſſes have been afflicting to every man of humanity, and called for aſſiſtance; and you have given it in terms equally candid, fair, and beneficial to all parties. And were it poſſible to give a negative to your intended law, that negative would be juſtly regarded as equal to the venom of a ſerpent, which firſt having given a wound, would keep it open to receive its deadly poiſon, without the poſſibility of a cure. But it is the wiſh of every good man and upright citizen, to cloſe the wound of affliction, and to ſee the balm of humanity poured into it. And this is the happy tendency of your very ſalutary Bill; for after ſecuring all the creditor can expect in reaſon and juſtice, you ſtep in between him and the unfortunate; not only ſecuring the former, but protecting the latter. You place an umpire between the paſſions of the one, and inability of the other: and after fairly deciding on that, you take from him the poſſibility of injuring credit and ſocial confidence. You then free him from a civil death, ſuffer him to ariſe again to comfort his family and aſſiſt his country. This event is endearing to the human character, and goes deep to the root of liberty;

and the protector of it in so tender a point shall be ranked among the best friends of human nature; for mercy and humanity must reflect honour to an individual, when Heaven itself receives its brilliancy from those intrinsic gems of the soul.

LETTER IX.

HERE lies the man who made the peace. In the hey-day of Lord Bute's power, he confeſſed very openly, in the preſence of the Peers, that it was the extent of his ambition to have that inſcription fixed on his tomb. This ſingular idea of the peace-maker, when his principles are known, and fairly examined, cannot be too often the ſubject of diſcuſſion; becauſe it contains all the cauſes of the preſent unhappy ſituation in England, though it is by his Lordſhip's confeſſion the ſource of his glory, who not, content to leave events expreſſive of his power to the lateſt poſterity, would fix on his tomb an inſcription to fortify the pen of the hiſtorian. Waving every argument on the prophetical union ſome people form between the maker of the peace and death, I ſhall fairly conſider facts and their cauſes, and leave it to the common ſenſe of my readers to determine, whether this maker of the peace can be called bleſſed.

Before the deceaſe of George the Second, the favourite began to be ſenſible of his aſcendancy, where his inſtructions had been given with the moſt viſible effects of ſucceſs. He exerted his art and every argument to gain

gain the county of Hants for one of his family: and to complete this, he ſpared no pains to convince the late Duke of Bolton of the power he was then approaching, of the advantages or riſks his Grace ran in croſſing his deſires to carry the election. And when he found that his integrity and attachment to his King, though declining in years, could not be ſapped and overcome, his life was marked out, and his blood to be ſpilt.

The next life devoted to the favourite's vengeance was Mr. Wilkes's, becauſe he had endeavoured, though in vain, to rouze the attention of the people, and bring out to their view the conſequences of his meaſures, which have been ſince not only ſeen, but felt. As this ſpilling of blood attended the dawn of his power, what deſcription can do juſtice to the meridian of it? How many unhappy victims have left widows and children to weep over thoſe graves the favourite's power has filled? How much diſcord (could pillows ſpeak) has the ſame power made between father and ſon, one neighbour and another? How have the principles of private confidence been undermined; every endearment of liberty and juſtice to the firſt characters in hiſtory, artfully ſapped or traduced?

At laſt a confederacy of miſchief was formed and cheriſhed in the diſtant Colonies, and a bloody civil war fomented, till every column of Engliſh honour and happineſs is made to totter. How can torrents of blood and diſcord, now as general as fatal to human happineſs, be reconciled to the character of peace-maker?

An inſcription ſuitable to the principles of the tyrant would be as follows:

HERE LIES THE MAN WHO DESTROYED THE PEACE OF ENGLAND FOR GENERATIONS YET UNBORN.

A peace-maker is one of the moſt amiable of characters, and it is juſtly ſaid, "Theirs "is the kingdom of heaven." An idea ſo truly irreproachable might be fixed to the innocence of the Lamb, a juſt emblem of a Saviour. And one would think it impoſſible for villainy to aſſume the name of ſuch ſacred characters, and by mixing with them, arrogate a qualified importance. Yet that this is the caſe, we need go to the fable, where the wolf puts on the innocent dreſs of the ſheep. We ſee proofs daily given by thoſe in power, imitating the ſeducer of virtue, who, to carry his point with a devoted victim, promiſes to make her happineſs his chief object, though his deſigns are to ruin her peace for ever.

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Theſe obſervations come home to the maker of the laſt peace, and no man can diſpute the likeneſs, who fairly reflects how much character and bloodſhed England has loſt and ſuſtained to ſupport the pride of that tomb, on which the favourite's inſcription might be fixed.

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LETTER X.

THE miniſter has brought England on the ſtage as Sampſon was brought by the Philiſtines, exerciſing ſtrength, but deprived of the light of reaſon; exerciſing it for the deriſion of enemies and ſelf-deſtruction. That this is a true, but melancholy deſcription of your ſituation, every uneducated peaſant can perceive; and yet this very miniſter continues in his power, and is permitted to govern the exchequer and treaſury, two of the moſt important places of truſt and confidence in the kingdom. And it cannot but ſurprize Gentlemen who live far from the metropolis, to hear how much is ſaid againſt the miniſter, ſee him loſe the confidence of the people, and yet gain in an equal degree the confidence of the Sovereign. To theſe Gentlemen it muſt be remarked, that the true intereſt of the King and people is inſeparable; but the truth is not ſo eaſily attained by one as the other. This Queen Elizabeth had good ſenſe to perceive, and frankneſs to allow. It muſt be alſo conſidered, his Majeſty ſees the ſplendor only of his ſubjects: he has but little knowledge of thoſe who live out of the nar-

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row boundaries of the court, of thoſe who are undone by the loſs of ſome Colonies, the diſtreſs of others, or general calamity ariſing from a wicked junto of men.

The People of England have not told him, by a general remonſtrance, that the men in whom he confides are his enemies; that though the nation has reſources, the extravagance of the miniſter muſt exhauſt them. The people have not with unanimity told his Majeſty, that they feel not only for the diſtreſs the miniſter's conduct has brought on their families; but that they feel for the loſs of national reſpect and dignity. That though ſituated far from the court, they find, for want of confidence in the miniſter, all foreign powers refuſe to ally with England, which they once courted and ſolicited for protection. That your natural enemies indulge moſt openly a firm paſſion to humble that character, wiſdom, and effuſion of blood has long annexed to this kingdom. A remonſtrance of this nature from your different counties and cities would probably bring the miniſter to the ſame ſtate of contempt at St. James's, to which he is brought in moſt places diſtant from it.

The people of England ſhould conſider, that no hopes are to be derived from the conduct of their delegates; for, on the firſt day's debate, a vote of compliment gave to

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the miniſter the votes of a whole ſeſſion, and bound and collected together, they will be left to the mercy of one who will ſhew as little as Caligula would have done to the collected necks of his countrymen, had the emperor's deciſive wiſhes been as prevalent as the miniſter's arts have been ſucceſsful. The loſs of reaſon is as fatal to England in one caſe, as the loſs of life in the other would have been to Rome.

LETTER

LETTER XI.

THE origin of national evil is not one of the ſecrets of nature; on the contrary, neither art can conceal it, treachery recommend its effects, nor illuſion reſcue its abettors from the vengeance of an injured people. Were not this to be the caſe, Lord Bute would not have quitted a ſphere of life in which his ambition delights, or denied that influence he glories in private to exert to the laſt extremity. He would not have given the inſidious kiſs, and deſerted his maſter, before he had obtained a vote to preſerve the man who had made the late ignominious peace.

The truth may be for ſome time concealed from the public; but by degrees it forces its way, firſt, through the boſom of the culprit, and then through every other impediment artfully raiſed to conceal it from the eyes of the people; neither can treachery be concealed from a man's own heart; and the miniſter knowing this to be a melancholy fact, follows the example of Lord Bute, and not only denies his influence in the cabinet, but his very exiſtence. He ſays, there is no prime miniſter in England; and dares to aſſert, that no

ſingle individual is ſuffered to direct the primum mobile of meaſures. By this inſidious language the whole miſcarriage of them is fixed where infallibility is ſaid to be placed, and where no error can be committed, and conſequently no reprehenſion made. This fallacy of language is become the bulwark of the preſent culprits, hoping by this formidable name of infallibility to keep off the impeachments; and alſo, by accumulating evils, hope from the number and intricacy of them, and confuſion of perſons employed in the public ſervice, to baffle the enquiries of the nation; but the whole plot is diſcovered. The origin and the ſecond cauſe of our national evils are plainly diſcovered; and England is called upon to aſſert that majeſty, it has been the firſt in the world to give to the character of the people, and agree whether it ſhall be mumbled any longer, or whether they will unite and cleanſe the Augean ſtable. It is no longer a doubt where the firſt impeachment ſhould be fixed, and how to ſupport it. Treachery has not ſo mingled good or evil, as to take down the boundaries that divide them. Theſe queſtious rap at the boſom, and demand a deciſive anſwer; words alone cannot convey it—actions muſt ſpeak: or, ſuppoſing it were poſſible to put to the choice of every man to declare, as far as the

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force of words can reach, whether he would be free or not, he would not dare to anſwer in the negative; yet could the barometer, by which Lord North and his ſecretary poſſeſs the riſe and fall of public integrity, be expoſed to view, how many bluſhes would cover the cheeks of ſome of the firſt families, of ſome too, who ſpeak fair and profeſs principles they privately violate with reſpect to the public. Were theſe people to be aſſembled where Magna Charta was ſigned, in the face of their countrymen, they would not dare to vote for its deſtruction: and yet when we ſee, by their behaviour in their individual capacity, ſuch proſtitutions made to the miniſter, what honeſt man can remain undiſturbed? What independent man refuſe to give his aſſiſtance to ſtop the completion of their downfall, the eſtabliſhment of military power, and preſerve a virtuous NO againſt the hour of attack from the ſerpent of ſeduction. Let him come from the treaſury, or proceed with the glittering parade of a court, he is ſtill a ſerpent.

LETTER XII.

MR. Pitt reſolved never to have conſented to make peace till the Bourbons had ſolicited it; and to avoid the chance of its interruption, he was reſolved to ſtrip the French of the fiſhery, that nurſery of navigation. This ſingle idea is ſufficient to recommend him to the affection of England; and I am hurt and aſtoniſhed, that ſo great a man ſhould be ſo little remembered, that pens of elegance, and the greateſt abilities, ſhould have ſhewn an indifference to do him juſtice, or backwardneſs to bring out to public view, a character ſo worthy to be imitated, at leaſt by thoſe who would deſerve well of their country. To give you a juſt idea of the fiſhery, I ſhall recur to events, which are inconteſtably true.

The French fleets, at the commencement of the war, were unable to quit their harbours, till the arrival of the ſailors from the fiſhery. This is a fact which cannot be conteſted; as little is it to be diſputed, that at the concluſion of the laſt war, the conſequence of the fiſhery was ſo apparent to the French negociator, that he employed all the addreſs peculiar to his court, all the fineſſe art could dictate, to procure the rights of the fiſhery, which were at laſt given

given up to that nation. But when this article of the ignominious peace was the object of conteſt between the French negociator and Mr. Pitt, finding his arguments were but futility, when oppoſed by the fortitude and ſagacity of the Engliſh patriot, he then humbly deſired him to read a bundle of papers, which, he ſaid, contained a great number of treaties and national compacts, that would be infringed by Mr. Pitt's opinion.

His requeſt of reading the papers was moſt peremptorily rejected; that of their laying upon the table, being eagerly ſolicited, was politely granted; but the French Gentleman hoped in vain to have overcome, by any temporizing plan, or to gain by ſtratagem the victory he had in his thoughts. At the end of three days, the time allowed for peruſal of the papers, they were returned in great order and unopened; for Mr. Pitt's reflection only added to the force of that meaſure his policy had recommended, as the only foundation a laſting peace could have been built upon.

At this nice and critical moment, what expence was too great, what liberality too profuſe, to accompliſh a peace, that would have given you the dominion of the ſeas for ages! Every day proves the conſequence of it; every diſgrace or difficulty

you

you have ſeen or felt, have ariſen from the loſs or ſuſpenſion of that dominion, and from that conſideration I have expatiated on the ſolidity with which Mr. Pitt ſupported his plan, and the wicked and fatal reverſe of Lord Bute's.

At that juncture, when the objects were a permanent peace, and honour and confidence, the fruits of a glorious war preceding it, œconomy for the moment, was prodigality for ages; but during the continuance of the war, Lord Bute was well aſſured, to have Mr. Pitt diſplaced, would have rouſed and ſpread an alarm in the nation, and carried deſtruction to his meditated ſchemes; therefore, to obſtruct the career of a glorious war, he recommended peace and œconomy. To carry on a war moſt likely to produce advantages to the relations of the Stuart family, does Lord Bute now endeavour to ſtop the vein of extravagance, through which the kingdom does, and will fatally bleed. That I may not appear to have a wiſh to injure his Lordſhip's principles unjuſtly, I ſhall rejoice to acknowledge my miſtake, if he will, as a friend to the public, come forth, and add his name to the Bedford Committee, or that of Weſtminſter.

LET-

LETTER XIII.

To the PRINCE *of* WALES.

FOrtunately for England, you might be of opinion, that it is no diſparagement of your illuſtrious rank to be called an Engliſhman; and as you would not aſſume the name without having an attachment to thoſe principles ſtom which its glory is derived, I ſhall addreſs you as actually poſſeſſing that, and every other ſentiment peculiar to a Prince born in England, and educated in the principles of freedom; and, I flatter myſelf, you will not refuſe your attention, when it is ſolicited to a matter of the utmoſt conſequence to your honour and happineſs, but be eager to receive information ſo agreeable to a good heart.

Then, illuſtrious Sir, to be glorious and happy, reſolutely aſſure every man who has the honour of your diſcourſe, that you are determined to come at, and cheriſh *Truth*. From this moment you are conſpicuouſly great, a comfort to your family, and a treaſure to the people of England. The characters of the great Edwards and Henrys, the amiable name of Queen Elizabeth, attach you to their virtues; and you, by a

ſenſible

ſenſible welcome of them to your boſom, infallibly make them your own. Patriotiſm, a tyrant to little minds, becomes to yours a mild and pleaſant friend: wiſely judging it to be too nicely allied to virtue, and the feelings of the man to be excluded the breaſt of a Prince.

Sydney and Locke upon government, you will carry in your boſom as faithful guides, that will never betray it; whilſt to the eye of diſcernment, the wickedneſs of thoſe authors will appear, who have endeavoured to wound the ſacred name of Patriotiſm, and to ſtab its beſt friends, Sydney, Ruſſel, &c. infamouſly giving to French gold and venality a victory over Engliſh magnanimity. And the ſame eye of diſcernment that can ſee though this attempt to level the character of England, will place it among thoſe wicked maxims of policy which followed Lord Bute into office.

No man, moſt Sacred Prince, will from this moment attempt to tell you, that the confederacy of honeſt and independent Engliſhmen, meeting for the beſt purpoſes, is an aſſociation of danger to your family; that an effort to preſerve the public money from being perverted to corrupt the morals of the people is a diſhonour to the crown of England; that the man who dared to carry that great kingdom in the midſt of victory to ſue

for

for an ignominious peace, called *The Peace of Paris*, to ſatisfy the Bourbons, relations to the Stuarts, is a friend to your family, or better entitled to its confidence, than to that of the nation. You will perceive how neceſſary the united force of the kingdom is become to counteract the miſchief effected by that wicked man. And the ſame good ſenſe will impreſs on your mind this unerring maxim, that the principles of a Stuart are as ſecretly employed, at this very moment, to wound its rival family of Brunſwick, as they are viſibly exerted to imbitter the repoſe of England.

As you will be able eaſily to diſcover theſe, and other private anecdotes of the Butean intrigue, you will ſoon acquire a knowledge of the cauſes that have been, for ſome time paſt, preying on the pillars of public character, at once ſhaking the manſion of the humbleſt ſubject, and not ſparing the foundation of the Throne. Seeing the cauſes, you will be able to contribute to remove the alarm and anxiety they have produced, and become an inſtrument of joy and glad tidings to the boſom of your amiable parents, and an honour to England, holding out to the univerſe an example of a Patriot Prince.

LETTER XIV.

LORD Bute has hithertoeſcaped into retirement; and his ſentiments, with reſpect to the great American buſineſs, are concealed from the public, and at preſent he is regarded as a tame ſpectator only, of meaſures which he certainly gave life to originally. That this is not conjecture, I will refer you to his ſentiments, which he delivered when the American ſyſtem was firſt forming. You ſhall hear what his opinion was, how delivered, and then, by comparing events with the tendency of it, leave the deciſion to be made by your own good ſenſe.

Lord Bute declared, at that critical moment, that ſlippery though the American ground were, yet he was for proceeding with the moſt unrelenting rigour, and that no conſideration could make him change that idea of employing force againſt the Colonies; and ſtill more emphatically declared, he could not give up in that point, no, not even to the wiſhes of one from whom he had received ſo much favour. The favourite may defy hiſtory to parallel this contempt of ſovereign eſteem, yet this opinion of his Lordſhip has been equalled by an obſtinacy

obſtinacy which ſtill appears with reſpect to America, and will appear as long as Lord North, whom we may ſafely regard as his friend and co-adjutor, can be permitted to get your money, and exhauſt your ſtrength: his declarations were once, and not very long after Lord Bute's ſentiments, diſcloſed in a tone as full of obſtinacy; and his actions have done more; they have convinced the world there is no hope of redreſs, whilſt he continues to be miniſter. His Lordſhip boldly aſſerts, after all the diſgrace he has fixed to the character of England, that he is innocent, and that the miſchief done to the nation has not been effected by him. This I deny; this I can prove to be an aſſertion as void of foundation as the baſeleſs fabric of a viſion. The Duke of Grafton did not leave the helm in a ſtorm; he left it when commerce was flouriſhing, when your enemies were ſunk in a pit of ſtupefaction, the effect of thoſe blows they had received during the laſt war. Reaſon could have diſſipated thoſe clouds, which began to be formed over the devoted head of America. Paſſion was preferred, and the humble ſupplications of that country changed for inſtruments of war. The miniſter aſſumed the maſk of candour, the more effectually to deceive the nation; and to proceed, as Lord Bute ſaid, with perſeverance; he has

told you at one time, to relieve you from taxes was his object; but after ſome doubts aroſe from this ground, he then played off a new deluſion; he urged the neceſſity of keeping up the ſupremacy of the kingdom. At laſt, inſtead of expected relief from your debts, the miniſter's conduct has fixed upon your tottering ſhoulders forty millions more; inſtead of ſupporting your ſupremacy, it has deſtroyed the dignity of your character; and after all this melancholy deception, he now calls for your concurrence—for what? not to give you a revenue; not to ſupport your ſupremacy; but to preſerve your very exiſtence. Scapin like, he cries out danger, and laviſhly promiſes to ſtand by you, at the very moment when your faculties, though long hoodwinked, enable you to perceive the perfidious champion.

LET-

LETTER XV.

FORMERLY, when the Sheriff of each county was choſen by the majority of the people, his character recommended him to their favour and confidence, and his zeal to preſerve the good opinion of his neighbours juſtly entitled him to the countenance of their approbation, and made him an inſtrument upon every emergency of public ſervice. Comparing theſe conſiderations with the conduct of the preſent Sheriffs, it is to be lamented, that this right of election ſhould be ſo tamely given up to the firſt Magiſtrate. Neither can I be ſaid to be uncandid in the aſſertion, when it is conſidered how the Gaveſtons and Spencers, in ancient times, and others of the preſent day, ſhew that the motives which beget favouritiſm at court, are different from thoſe principles that attach the love of a neighbour. Lord Bute is no favourite of the people; Mr. Wilkes as little at St. James's. Lord Chatham and Lord ——— are as ſtrong proofs of this aſſertion, that a contrariety ſometimes prevails, and is ſufficient to create a jealous ſuſpicion of the modern Sheriffs. He is no longer an object of popular choice, but miniſterial. He is no longer an inſtrument

ment of ſervice but to the man who happens at a county election to have the favour of the miniſter. In making this obſervation, I except ſome worthy men, who are not to be corrupted. Still I am warranted in ſaying, that in general the Sheriffs, by their leaning to prerogative, ought not to be permitted to aſſume, on their own characters, rights the people ſhould hug in their own boſoms. It was from their own good opinion and favour the Sheriff originally derived conſequence; and he ſhould be made to know this truth. Let us read over the Bill of Rights and Magna Charta, examine the ſacred principles they are built upon, and ſupported by, and then will any Engliſhman be able to check a thought from riſing in his boſom and demanding this queſtion—Is he, who by birth is free, obliged to aſk a Sheriff's conſent to meet and conſult upon matters relative to the honour or welfare of his country?

Suppoſe this to be not the true ſituation of Engliſh liberty, would you not be under the will of that little creature, whether you ſhould be allowed to conſult upon meaſures which his maker, Lord North, might think too important for public diſcuſſion? Could you expect to have your meetings ſanctified by his indulgence? As ſoon and reaſonably might you expect to ſee Lord Bute at your

county

county meetings, to conſult upon the welfare of the public: it is therefore moſt ridiculous to ſubmit your own reaſon to the caprice of a ſingle individual, ſo choſen and circumſtanced as a Sheriff is at preſent. Remember what partiality was ſhewn at the laſt general election. In the county of Dorſet the people had not an opportunity of making a nomination, becauſe the Sheriff, (from his conduct I ſpeak) was reſolved to favour a court candidate, and prevent the people from putting a negative upon him. This is not aſſertion without proof to ſupport it; the fact is notorious. Many other inſtances are to be adduced to ſatisfy Gentlemen in a reſolution never to make reſtrictions upon their judgment, that ſhould be free and uncontrouled, and never to apply to the Sheriff to know whether you ſhould meet or not, previous to an election. In ſhort, let him be as a gaoler, reſpected and regarded as a fit perſon to guard the bodies of unhappy men deſtined to confinement. But liberty, which is independency of reaſon, you ſhould keep under your own guardianſhip; and remember, whoever refuſes to protect in this inſtance, will be ever called a traitor of his country.

LETTER

LETTER XVI.

FOrtunately for France, when Sully was Miniſter, Henry the Fourth was King; and as the one had a head full of ſolid, uſeful knowledge, the heart of the other was ready to receive the advantage of ſo great a bleſſing. By ſuch a combination, the diſtreſs occaſioned by abuſes in office was changed into order and proſperity. Nor yet was Sully's plan to be fully executed by a ſingle miniſter; it has been conſtantly kept alive, was cheriſhed by Colbert, and at laſt perfected by Mr. Neckar, the preſent miniſter, who was born, not in France, but in Geneva, as Mr. Burke is by birth an Iriſh Gentleman.

From France, let us take a view of Spain at the time Philip poſſeſſed Peru and Mexico: for want of a ſenſible King and a wiſe miniſter, we ſee thoſe fountains of wealth turned into rivers of blood and perplexity. Hiſtory does not produce two more remarkable points than thoſe I have mentioned and brought out to your obſervation, when England is adding to the number of thoſe great events an example to contraſt againſt the happy ſituation of France at the time I have mentioned, and to equal

that

that of Spain in its unfortunate miſconduct at the ſame æra.

A few years ago England poſſeſſed American provinces, much ſuperior to Peru and Mexico in point of honour and happineſs, as the poſſeſſion of them was obtained by blood, furious pride, and ambition. Our America was founded on peace and tranquillity, by the wiſdom and ſimplicity of a Quaker. Without a ſingle garriſon town, America was as paſſive and obedient as the beſt guarded province in the King of Pruſſia's dominions.

All of a ſudden, by obſtinacy and the moſt inſulting pride, thoſe Provinces are torn from this ſtate, to which it would have given both ſtrength and beauty; a misfortune we ſhall be more ſenſible of, whenever we return to a day of peace, and are able to make up the accounts of all the loſſes and expences of a ſyſtem our preſent miniſter has ſo uniformly ſupported, that is, and will continue to be pregnant with every kind of diſcredit and ultimate deſtruction.

Fairly conſidering theſe conſequences, England has reaſon to tremble, and bleeding at every pore, juſtly requires the balm of conſolation. Mr. Burke has offered ſuch in the moſt ingenious and ſalutary preſcription; and, fortunately for England, it is ſupported by the moſt uncommon abilities

with which Heaven has diſtinguiſhed a few real ſtateſmen, who compoſe a part of the preſent parliament.

Theſe men, at a very critical ſeaſon, have done their duty to their country; and though as yet reſiſted and overcome by a very obſtinate miniſter, yet they have convinced the people how their money has been, and is laviſhed, not to ſupport the kingdom, but ſap its foundation: they have convinced the public, that till the tide of ſuch proſtitution be ſtopped, the fountain of legiſlation muſt remain impure and obnoxious.

This information has been ſo clearly given, without the draw-back of a ſingle intereſted idea, that all independent men in England are ſenſible of the utility of the preſent plan of reform; and till it is adopted, will conſider themſelves inſecure in their property, and undermined in their liberty: nor will the preſent, or any other miniſter, be able to perſuade the people, that they mean well and honeſtly to the conſtitution, till Mr. Burke's plan is permitted by them to be carried into execution: of the efficacy of it there is not a doubt harboured; even the moſt voracious, the Dartaneufs in gluttony over the treaſure of the public, are obliged to pay compliments to the very object they are reſolved to devour.

A plan

A plan ſo pure and full of ſolid ſenſe has forced out even Sir Fletcher from his intrenchments, and one day made him a patriot, another too modeſt to give only a ſingle opinion, and a third a convert to new-diſcovered honour and integrity.

What might not be expected from a plan capable of giving ſentiment to a man, who, by his own confeſſion, felt his blood run cold within him, whilſt the great Pitt's ideas offered ineffectually to his boſom the holy flame of patriotiſm? A plan, which even in the preſent moment of diſſipation, goes ſo near to heal the poiſon of venality, might yet, with the future concurrence of fortunate events, be able to work out a remedy; but yet, in the mean time, every friend to his country is bound to cheriſh the ſeeds of reformation, in hopes that their children, if not themſelves, might reap the happy fruits of a more mild and temperate ſeaſon; in the interim, every tribute of gratitude ſhould be given to the great ſtateſman, who has at this very dark and dangerous junction framed, with ſo much pains and real ingenuity, a pillar of adamant, able to ſupport a great kingdom, tottering under a load of debt, and reeling with luxury.

The metropolis is called upon to ſet an example, and preſent the patriot with the ſame marks of eſteem and approbation with

which Mr. Keppel and Rodney have been very properly diſtinguiſhed. If an Admiral, for diſcharging his duty on the day of action, deſerves to be rewarded by every teſtimony of applauſe, the ſenator, whoſe wiſdom, life, and ingenuity are devoted to the ſervice and honour of the public, is equally entitled to them.

LET-

LETTER XVII.

WHEN the thing itſelf ſpeaks, every boſom that poſſeſſes a heart muſt feel the force of conviction, and be not a little ſurprized to ſee how its language has been artfully employed to explain its import, when coupled with the character of Miniſter; and, by a compariſon with Lord Shelburne, to convey inſignificance to him, or derive conſequence to itſelf. I ſhall go on with a compariſon as ſupported by facts and principles, and not as carried on by a vein of wit and humour Lord North is acknowledged to poſſeſs; to both I am ready to allow proper merit, as giving life to a table well covered with luxury and French wine, as capable, under a maſter of a public ſchool, to give a boy the character of poſſeſſing great parts, becauſe his humour in an epigram might ſhew the levity of youth, though deſtitute of thoſe marks of judgment and ſolidity which might do one day either honour or ſervice to his country—yet his character is made. I ſhall leave theſe little marks of an eaſy and an unembarraſſed mind, and ſtick to principles of ſolid ſenſe, ſuch as form the ſtateſman, that is, the friend to the many.

Lord

Lord Shelburne, in the dawn of his political life, made one of Lord Bute's miniſtry; but judgment, and the love of his country, ſoon induced him to fly from the arch-favourite to Mr. Pitt; and the error of chance was moſt perfectly removed by thoſe principles, which the great patriot infuſed into the heart of his young, but confidential friend, which cemented them cloſely, till death left Lord Shelburne to imitate the great example of him with whom he could no longer co-operate. This ſingle feature of his character makes it valuable to the public, and it is endeared by others as amiable in private life. In the hours of receſs from parliamentary buſineſs he is anxiouſly employed, not in the vicious circle of the courtier, but to collect knowledge and information for the ſervice of the public. Men of learning find his doors open to receive them; the ſciences find a warm and comfortable hoſpitality under his roof; not only Engliſhmen, but foreigners, acknowledge this truth, and Abbé Raynal, a real friend to human nature, gives Lord Shelburne a character that not only exalts the individual, but the country of which he is a Peer. In the boroughs, where he might be ſuppoſed to have an intereſt, we find it exerted in favour of the moſt conſpicuous talents. At this critical moment, when it ſeems to be a decided

point

point to break the heart of patriotiſm, and build upon its ruins every idea of prerogative, his Lordſhip has given the moſt inequivocal marks of fortitude and affection to his country. And now facts ſhall ſpeak for the other Lord, who has begged a compariſon.

His Lordſhip poſſeſſes a rich vein of humour, and certainly poſſeſſes a ſtrong, energetic elocution, which daily ſhews the goodneſs of his nerves. With theſe endowments he ſoon found his way to Lord Bute, and has conſtantly paid him, or his ſyſtem, a devotion little inferior to bigotry. Not an image of folly has been carved by his Scotch friend, to which he has not bowed and paid reverence; and therefore he always, as may be conſtantly remarked, talks of conſcience in every ſpeech; when he is puſhed in calculation, when he is menaced with impeachment, conſcience is his aſylum. This, therefore, fortifies my obſervation, that his devotion to the new ſyſtem of prerogative is as ſtrong bigotry as that of the friar, who never dips his hand in the polluted fountain placed at the entrance of the Popiſh church, but with a ſuppoſed reference to a clear conſcience. His Lordſhip, conſidering him as a miniſter, has paid no regard to the *literati*; his roof is never warmed with comfort and hoſpitality to cheriſh the ſciences; in the room of theſe, muſtard-headed Sir Grey,

and

and empty Charles, called Spaniſh, not from his punctilio of honour, but dark and haughty Mooriſh pride, are his boſom friends. Not a ſingle hour during the receſs is devoted to collect information for the ſervice of the public; on the contrary, it is generally made an object of his humour and jocularity. Not a ſingle ſtep is taken to conciliate the minds of the people, or to leave, as a legacy for all the advantages he has received from their purſes, one ſingle popular act; merrily to carry on the bark of ſtate he is always ready to fling Magna Charta overboard, and the heavy materials of liberty. In ſhort, when the drudgery of office does not compel him to attend to buſineſs, levity engages his time. The people he has conſtantly conſidered as a *non-entity*; and he has convinced his Majeſty of this opinion, at a moment when it was in his power to have given him a true ſenſe of the nation, conciliated prerogative and liberty, and removed the preſent cauſes of anarchy and confuſion. But ſuch behaviour was incompatible with the heart of a man who has lately been proved to be connected with, and a favourer of, an infamous annuity uſurer, Mr. L. a man ſo abhorrent in his character, that the renowned Chartres would have fixed a ſtain on his name in addition to his others; had he lodged a ſingle night under his roof, he would

would have been ſhocked to receive a favour which he muſt have known the pillow or broken hearts of hundreds had paid for. I could proceed in the compariſon; but what has already been ſaid muſt be ſufficient to ſhow how little it is to be ſupported, without aſſerting the thing to be what it is not—moral and patriotic.

LETTER XVIII.

LORD Cheſterfield has obſerved, that the notorious rogue Chartres would have given a conſiderable ſum for the character of being an honeſt man, not from a love of honeſty, but from the counterfeit to be able to carry on villainy with the greater ſucceſs. The idea has been borrowed by a ſet of cunning men, who have found their way into a certain aſſembly, and to keep their ſeats and advantages ariſing from them, aſſume a qualified character, by now-and-then giving a conſcientious vote. Aſk how they voted on ſuch a day; from an impulſe of conſcience, they will anſwer againſt Lord North; another day they kept away, from the ſame good principle: and yet you will find theſe very conſcientious men attend the miniſter's levee, and ſupport his meaſures ſyſtematically: even that man, whom Junius ſays, treachery itſelf cannot truſt, had one of theſe conſcientious votes, to carry him ſecurely, like a Dutch veſſel, pretending peace or neutrality, to different ports, even of an enemy. Ye electors, beware of theſe men: they will inſinuate juſt to betray you—gain your confidence one day, and ſell it the next: theſe

theſe are the very men who publicly aſſert, that government cannot go on, unleſs the miniſter, bad or good, be ſupported by a majority, who, at this rate of reaſoning, are ſent into parliament, not to conſult or debate for the people, but juſt to give a legiſlative monoſyllable.

To this miniſterial logic I ſhall obſerve, that a corrupt miniſter could not carry a ſingle wicked vote, were the parliament to be honeſt, to whoſe judgment and counſels his meaſures were to be ſubmitted for approbation, inſtead of their being impoſed on ſlaviſh obedience: *ergo*, a bad miniſter muſt have a bad parliament: but I ſhall never allow, that government is wrapped up in the ſimple character of miniſter; and though he may be firm, yet government may be undone. And if the contrary was the fact, our government would be a very capricious machine, and the materials which form it muſt be made of a very tickliſh compoſition, of venality itſelf, a canker to human happineſs and permanency. This is not true; therefore an upright miniſter will be always certain of the ſupport of the people, and when the miniſter is honeſt, parliament muſt be good from neceſſity; and from the united counſels of a parliament and miniſter diſpoſed to pleaſe the people, and ſupport cordially meaſures, not as recommended by

perſonal profit and advantage, but as inſeparable from national honour or diſgrace, the nation can expect to be happy; but not from intrigue, the treaſury whiſper or little cunning. Opiate may lull the Turk, diſſipation diſtract the levity of the French, Spaniſh pride ſuffocate the ſenſes; but a juſt participation of the advantages given by the wiſdom of Providence, and ſecured by a conſtitution moſt capable to carry on its deſigns happily to mankind, can alone pleaſe and keep the Engliſh quiet and unagitated. And the miniſter or King who ſhall follow any other direction, will, ſooner or later, fall a dupe to his cunning and artifice. The end of government is tranquillity. Are the people in that ſituation at preſent? How come they to be deprived of it?

Lord Bute, I appeal to you for the firſt original cauſe. You have long ſtudied botany: have you yet found out an antidote for the poiſon which you have infuſed in the veins, that carry from the heart its influence into the arteries of the political body?

If, my Lord, you are ſilent, or do not ſee the danger in its extent, I hope very ſoon you will be more ſkilful of the temper of the Engliſh conſtitution. On you, Lord North, I appeal next. Can you any longer dare to

tell

tell his Majeſty, that your ſyſtem is agreeable to the people; that their preſent united voice and national combination is only a phantom of a few mad-headed men not to be regarded? Will you dare to continue to abuſe the influence you have acquired, by having long had the national purſe in your hands, and to bring his Majeſty's latter days to the grave with ſorrow? You paſs for his friend for two reaſons: you have always ſupported Lord Bute, and you pretended to be his Majeſty's friend, by falling into the gap, when the Duke of Grafton could no longer in decency give his aſſiſtance, as a miniſter, to meaſures he found to be dangerous and diſhonourable. From that moment, like an opaque body, you have ſtood in the way, and not permitted a ſingle ray of truth to paſs from the people to the King. If you are reſolved to act this part any longer, the people will appeal to that Divine Omnipotence that can turn chaos into order, and whoſe *fiat* can ſay, Let there be light, and you will be no longer able to intercept it.

LETTER XIX.

LORD North's apology for his conduct during his long adminiſtration, is cenſure the moſt ſearching to hearts of the ſmalleſt ſenſibility, and his attempt to vindicate his own judgment is a reprobation of yours; nor can any other concluſion be drawn from his plauſible language, than that your paſt acquieſcence is interpreted by him as a cordial approbation of his conduct, a total ſurrender of your feelings, and alſo of all right to cenſure or impeach your popular miniſter, the confidential friend of the public, the champion of their deſires. If the miniſter has ſpoken truth, if your own judgment be ſo unconſtitutionally given up, if his meaſures have been ſo comfortable to your private happineſs, then, aſſemble in your different counties, burn your petitions, and let your aſſociations be conſidered as not coming from reaſon, but ſuggeſted by a general delirium. On the contrary, if his conduct has not been approved of, though not vigorouſly oppoſed by you, having left it for ſome years paſt to be checked and controlled by your repreſentatives; after a full conviction that they have done neither; that the miniſter has taken the advantage of influence over their

their paſſions, and obtained the temporary conſent of majorities to adopt what he had privately concerted; and as what had been ſo adopted has been called the approbation and ſyſtem of the people, you are bound to refute this doctrine in the moſt public manner, and take the moſt convincing method of general petitions and remonſtrances, to make his Majeſty ſenſible, that the miniſter's meaſures have been conſtantly repugnant to your honour and happineſs; and that you cannot but conſider your character as wounded by his defamatory aſſertions of enjoying your eſteem and concurrence. I call on his lordſhip to declare, whether your approbation was given to the contempt with which he permitted the petition from America, preſented by Mr. Richard Penn, to be treated? I call on the miniſter to anſwer for another very important event, the taking off the rudder of an Engliſh ſhip by the Spaniards. Was it agreeable to the people to ſee this event flaſh diſgrace in their faces, and ſo many thouſands exhauſted, juſt to fortify the Bourbons in an idea, at that time taken up, of once more making an effort againſt Great Britain?

Thou immaculate conſcientious lamb of Lord Bute, has your memory failed you, or do you really think the people of England are to be any longer deceived, to be any

longer

longer impoſed upon by the plauſibility of language, and to be again tempted by ſuch to give up their own judgments, which they have formed moſt deciſively on a ſeries of events for ſome years paſt, and which have marked your adminiſtration? No: the patience of the people you have been pleaſed to conſider as inſenſibility, and their acquieſcence to the ſuppoſed knowledge of the miniſter, as confidence placed in his integrity. You are miſtaken in both. You want art, though poſſeſſed of a good deal, to impoſe on the people any longer, or to eraſe from their minds the difficulties, diſgrace, internal diſquiet, and foreign danger you have aſſiſted a wicked junto to bring on the devoted head of England. Nor will you be able for the future to plead in your favour the people's acquieſcence. From your own eſtate, where you was ſome years ſince burnt in effigy, to the metropolis, and every part of the Britiſh dominions, the miniſter is unmaſked, and his meaſures, though painted an inch thick, at laſt ſhew the melancholy ſkeleton of ignorance. Other miniſters have been temporized with, and the ſyſtem adopted by Lord Bute has been inſidiouſly put into their hands; but the outlines of deſtruction to liberty were ſo apparent, that they ſhrunk back, and though miniſters, yet had too much ſenſibility to be the actors of a tragedy,

gedy which the manager behind the ſcenes, like a ſecond Bayes, attempted to force upon them in the moſt ridiculous, moſt unbecoming terms and poſitions. At laſt, accident, which ſometimes does more than ſagacity, fixed on Lord North as a champion, and he has been true to his truſt, of aſſerting a ſyſtem of the moſt genuine Tory principles. Though he has avowed that the outlines were marked out before he was miniſter, yet, by his ſteady adherence to them, he has made them his own. He has done more; he has ſmiled over the bloody victim, and, at the inſtant of his adviſing or defending meaſures full of calamity and bloodſhed, he has appealed to conſcience as a companion of his thoughts, when they have been as obnoxious to it, as the principles of genuine peace are repugnant to that inſulting name of peace-maker, Lord Bute's ambition has made a part of the proud inſcription to be placed on his tomb, whenever death, to gratify that ambition, ſhall act a merciful part to England.

LETTER XX.

ABBE RAYNAL, than whom human nature has not a kinder friend, or nations a more ſtrenuous advocate for liberty, has given the higheſt encomiums of the character of the Creole—reſcuing it totally from thoſe opinions which have been applied to it, ſometimes even in England, in contempt of thoſe who happened to be born on the other ſide of the Atlantic, though allied to the beſt of families, and educated with them in the principles of Engliſhmen. Boys frequently, at the moſt capital ſchools, have but too wantonly looked down with a ſupercilious eye on thoſe who were Coloniſts. For want of having been well inſtructed by their maſters, they have arrogated on this ſuppoſed ſuperiority, not conſidering that ſome of every rank have contributed to people the colonies, mixed blood with the inhabitants, and derived from them ultimately advantages, that have given comfort to individuals, and contributed more than can be eaſily deſcribed to the brilliancy of England; inſomuch, that jealouſy has ariſen from thoſe who have returned to their mother-country with riches and affluence: and this jealouſy has got an aſcendancy over reaſon,

reaſon, and gone a great way to aſſiſt the meaſures carried on againſt America. To the ſame cauſe I impute the indifference Jamaica has received from the miniſter; for it has been left open to the attacks of the Spaniards, when they are known to have entered into the preſent war with the hopes of recovering that iſland, which gives ſo much mortification to their pride, whilſt it remains in the hands of the Engliſh.

However, I am perſuaded, had the colonies been fully poſſeſſed of the eſteem and affection of their fellow-ſubjects reſiding in England, the native generoſity of Engliſhmen would have been exerted in ſupport of their brethren on the other ſide of the Atlantic, and the lion of England would have compelled the miniſter to pay a more attentive regard to ſo important a place. Beſides lucrative views, it ſhould be remembered, Jamaica has given to patriotiſm a Beckford, to ſcience a Dawkins, and the happy mixture of the ſcholar and gentleman, every court in Europe have ſeen and acknowledged in Mr. James, to the credit of the Colonies.

To the others Mr. Glover, as a man of learning and commercial knowledge, not to be ſurpaſſed in the univerſe, has done juſtice, and given the ſtrongeſt reaſons to

convince every mechanic, as well as land-holder, how much he is obliged to thoſe very colonies—whilſt men of ſcience are convinced, from a knowledge of Mr. Freeman, Mackinnin, and others, that the ſtores of heaven, which have added ſo much luſtre to the character of the Engliſh, in point of taſte and abilities, are ſufficient to enrich the minds of thoſe who happened to be born on the other ſide of the Atlantic. Whilſt I attempt to do juſtice to modern colonies, I confeſs thoſe of former times were mere creatures of the ambition of tyrants, who conquered them; it is commerce that has gone ſo far to explode that ſavage example, inſomuch, that even the proud monarchy of France has been obliged to ſtoop, and uſe addreſs to endear its old, and ſecure its colonies taken from England during the preſent war. Colonies contribute ſo eſſentially to create and make commerce flouriſh, and conſequently to create not only ſtrength, but naval power and dominion, that the ſame wiſhes to acquire both, which have involved one part of Europe in a bloody war, do not permit any of thoſe who pretend to be neutral to gloſs over their real deſigns. They are evident to common ſenſe, and, ſooner than is apprehended, will convince the Engliſh miniſter, that

that the ſerpent of ambition is ready to fall on the moſt unfortunate in the ſtruggle.

Such being the inſidious temper of our old allies and pretended friends, can England be too much animated to accompliſh the following objects? I mean, exemplary puniſhment of thoſe who have dared to tell his Majeſty, that to divide, is the way to keep his ſubjects within the reins of power; to conciliate the minds of all our fellow-ſubjects, whether Iriſhman, Creole, or American; and by a cordial union of ſtrength and affection, add ſhoulder to ſhoulder, cruſh the confederacy of enemies, who are now as formidable, as they have been always inveterate.

LETTER

LETTER XXI.

To the Committees appointed to the aſſociating Counties and Towns in England.

GENTLEMEN,

THE great confidence a moſt eſſential and leading part of the kingdom has placed in you, is very ſufficient to excite a moſt honourable emulation and political caution at the ſame time; and both are neceſſary to your function, which is not only important, but delicate; for the different rays of public ſpirit being collected from every corner of the kingdom, will be not only preſerved, as they are ſo properly concentered in a committee in each county; but may be able, by zeal, and your wiſely preſerving a temper free from jealouſy, to convince Europe, and America itſelf, that Engliſh liberty, which has been regarded for ſome time paſt as burnt down to the ſocket, like an expiring taper, rekindles, and blazes out with freſh vigour, when it appears to be extinguiſhed and irrecoverably loſt.

Gentlemen, I addreſs you, as bearing a very exalted character, and hope you will beſtow your attention to a matter, though not abſolutely eſſential, yet it muſt be allowed

lowed to be animating to the cauſe of public freedom, and conducive to cheriſh ſentiments of patriotiſm. Let me adviſe you to erect, by ſubſcription, a magnificent pillar or monument in Runny-Mead, a building ſo ſtately as to attract the curioſity of even Princes and royal viſitants in England, and force them to view it with pleaſure and admiration.

That field ſhould be held ſacred, and rendered for ever conſpicuous, as being the ſpot where Magna Charta was ſigned: the title-deed of the nobleſt poſſeſſion was there acknowledged by one King, and rendered binding to all his ſucceſſors; even by that King was the title-deed of the nation acceded to, though he had firſt endeavoured to perpetuate the Royal Charta of deſpotiſm, and had actually imbibed a firm notion, that too frequently prevails, of the hereditary enmity which liberty and prerogative are ſaid to be inſeparable from, and though, from the reſult of that day's meeting, the King might have received a miniſterial whiſper, that the throne had received a ſhock—yet that doctrine has been ſince confuted, and the ſcale has preponderated on the ſide of truth; and when the throne has been approached by its real friends, they have been ready to acknowledge, that the ſame principles of reaſon and liberty which make the people happy, exalt

their

their King, and fix him in the political world as the moſt illuſtrious of monarchs. Neither does the monarchy loſe its luſtre by being limitted; that is fixed by a boundary all human power demands; it is left, however, without a check as far as reaſon can poſſibly go, and the farther the King's will is extended in this reſpect, the more he will pleaſe a free people.

A monument erected in Runny-Mead will be at this period a ſort of renewal of the Charta: your money will be ſpent in ſetting an example England has yet been without, in regard to erecting ſuch inſtructive monuments.

The Romans by ſuch have rendered themſelves almoſt immortal. In almoſt every field, where the Romans, from a zeal of glory, acquired any ſignal victory, their countrymen, from generoſity of temper, fixed ſome triumphal arch: by recording the greatneſs of thoſe who had ſerved their country, they preſerved a monument of their own ſenſibility. Not to recapitulate the number of venerable monuments which the Romans have left of their greatneſs of ſoul in various parts of the world, I ſhall at preſent confine myſelf to that of Orange; it contains a triumphal Arch, which has eſcaped the great ravage of Time, and the greater tyranny of the Goths, and to the

preſent

preſent day preſerves the name and victories of C. Martius, and does more, it familiarizes the hiſtory of his time, and brings it freſh to the diſcourſe of every ſhopkeeper; while travellers from all nations view this reſpectable object with a glow of admiration; for, thoſe aged monuments of public virtue, in their decay, excite reſpect, as, in their more modern and perfect ſtate, they animate contemporary citizens to great actions.

Every fragment of this kind of antiquity ſeems to be allied in ſome meaſure to an unperiſhable ſoul; every aged and ſolemn excreſcence growing out of them, become more enforcing to the heart, than the beſt hiſtorian can hope to be in the cool cloſet of a philoſopher.

How much is it to be lamented, that Creſſy, Agincourt, and other places, where Engliſh bravery has accompliſhed ſo much glory, for want of theſe inſtructive monuments, ſhould be with difficulty diſcovered by the moſt curious traveller—the very people who live near them, being ignorant that any great atchievements had been ever made in fields ſo void of any trace, or monument to inſtruct and keep alive the ſame, that ought to be immortal, and reſpected even by enemies.

Gentlemen, as your ardour is ſincere, I will ſay no more to touch and kindle it; but flatter myſelf, if you cannot acquire new additions to liberty, you will at leaſt not fail to immortalize what your anceſtors have with blood and wiſdom already acquired.

LETTER XXII.

LORD N—th's effigy was once burnt in his own neighbourhood; and ſurely if his parliamentary conduct could excite ſuch a ſpirit of reſentment in neighbours, it cannot be wondered at that America, uninfluenced by any other motive than plain truth, ſhould have entertained at leaſt an equal degree of indignation againſt his harſh and irritating meaſures: for though ſo long in office, and brought up as it were at the foot of Gamaliel, he has not had power to conceal or palliate their malignancy, nor, blundering on ſuch a variety of ground, touched on a ſingle event favourable to the wiſhes and real proſperity of the nation. One day for coercion, another for relaxation; one day breathing the language of deſpotiſm, another day abject ſervility: he firſt applies to the avarice of the people, and attempts to excite in them a deſire of taking from the pocket of the Americans what would fill their own.

This doctrine was ſoon worn thread-bare. He then endeavours to touch the pride of a luxurious and haughty country; he ſtarts ſupremacy, till the phantom could be kept

up no longer: he is then filled with regard to the Colonies, and expreſſes his zeal to ſave them from their oppreſſors; to be reſcued from oppreſſion was the very wiſh that ruled America: but whoſe feelings were to determine what the oppreſſion was, and by whom made. This fallacy, like the others, was like ſprinkling a few green leaves to cover a quick-ſand, the more effectually to ſeduce the unguarded paſſenger to tread on the inſidious ſpot. The miniſter is again defeated. He then argues a briſk war, and raiſes a ſupply ſcarce to be borne, and never in any former period raiſed, for quelling an inſurrection, or even ſupporting the nation in the moſt bloody civil war.

A very ſhort time after this formidable appearance of war, he argued in a very different ſtile, and ſolicited peace as the end of policy and judgment.

Obſerve how theſe plans vary; and yet the ſame fatal principles point out the miniſter conſtantly unſucceſsful and unreformed by experience.

As in the commencement of the American war a ſtripling army was pronounced ſufficient to ſubjugate America, a ſtripling commiſſion of men, in every reſpect diſqualified for it, was now choſen to ſettle the peace and conciliate the minds of thoſe who were in principles firm, in ſagacity deep,

and

and experience grey. When the commiſſioners were firſt appointed, the liſt of them was generally regarded as a ſatire on the miniſtry; but it came out to be not invention made to hurt the miniſter, but his plan to wound the nation ſtill deeper. Where were all your men of experience, trained to buſineſs, and men of conſequence, which this moſt important buſineſs required? What can the miniſter ſay in defence of himſelf for thus inſulting the nation, and making it an object of deriſion in every court in Europe? Where was his affection for his Sovereign, thus to have rendered his ſacred name, by a falſe repreſentation of it, diſgraced, and the reſpect due to his high character, thus turned into contempt? Where was then the lofty notion of ſupremacy? How trifling does the name of the Engliſh miniſter from this moment appear! How great muſt be the ſurprize of all Europe, by which it was well known what Lord Chatham's opinion was on that important object, reconcilement of England and America! How ardently is it to be wiſhed, that the opinion and language of that ſtateſman, for the honour of England, could eclipſe that of the miniſter, and hide it from the eyes of poſterity! When the former gave his ſentiments relative to his conduct, he convinced every cool and impartial man

of

of its fatal tendency. His ſpeech was eſteemed as a perſpective glaſs of the diſgrace and bloodſhed that have ſince been the conſequence of the American civil war The Colonies he treated with reſpect, becauſe he wiſhed to make them conformable to great and honourable purpoſes. He glowed to teſtify a proper affection for them, and to maintain at the ſame time the dignity of England. His whole ſyſtem was oppoſed by the preſent miniſter. Still he has been ſupported, and, like the conjuror who ſported with the honeſt credulity of Abel Drugger, he has triumphed over the credulity of England. It is at laſt perceived, great though your reſources have been, they have not enabled you to carry on a ſucceſsful conteſt againſt thoſe Colonies, it was your glory when Mr. Pitt was miniſter to defend and protect.

LETTER

LETTER XXIII.

DRIVEN from every poſt of defence, the miniſter's friends, to palliate meaſures they can no longer defend, aſſert, that he is the inſtrument only, and that ſome overruling influence has for ſome years paſt framed the whole political ſyſtem. I join iſſue in this apology. If this is granted, from every principle of argument, his Lordſhip becomes more reproachable: did he really act upon the beſt of his judgment, though his motives might be erroneous, yet, dictated by conſcience, they could not amount to turpitude in the miniſter: at the ſame time the country would not be leſs unhappy to be governed by one ſo full of error, ſo fatally miſled by a falſe conception of things. This attempt to parry diſarms him from all excuſe of his conduct, whilſt the very mention of conſcience reprobates thoſe principles, that produce him a ready inſtrument, not to ſupport a favourite queſtion on ſome particular occaſion, but the whole maſs of venality; whilſt his forfeiture of every ſocial endearment muſt at laſt exclude from the ſcale of argument thoſe pleas of his family regard, which have ſo long preponderated againſt

againſt that ſovereign contempt he has ſhewn for the eſteem of his fellow ſubjects.

Whence can his Lordſhip now derive an aſylum? Will he fly, like a Romiſh culprit, to the pales of the church, and plead his attachment to religion? He cannot maintain that ground for a ſingle moment. When he talks of religion, I will follow him not juſt mechanically to hear a ſermon; I will fix my attention to his public behaviour, and weigh it fairly with the powers a miniſter poſſeſſes to befriend religion, and countenance the allegiance due to it from ſo exalted a ſubject. Search the records of public acts, and find out a ſingle regulation made by the miniſter to repair thoſe depredations in the church, its enemies, or that natural decay of time, have made in the ſacred edifice. You ſearch a barren ſoil. Have the clergy from exemplary piety, unaccompanied by intereſt, that canker of merit, found their way to his Lordſhip's favour? Unattended by ſuch, it has been inacceſſible. Have men of piety and learning been carefully ſent out to the various Britiſh ſettlements to cheriſh and propagate our holy religion? Juſt the contrary. In Canada, the moſt extenſive province belonging to England, it has been nipt in the bud: in that part of the world biſhops from the Church of Rome are allowed, not toleration, but predominancy.

The

The one is the moſt noble attribute of our free religion, yet the other will be reſtleſs, till the roots of the Proteſtant religion are torn up. Will the ſimplicity of a poor Engliſh curate be able to contend againſt all the pomp and authority from Rome? Can profeſſion in the miniſter atone for ſuch mockery to his God and country? Still I grant virtue and religion to have been oſtentatiouſly uſed by the miniſters to effect what open vice was unequal to, the deception of the people.

LETTER XXIV.

CORRUPTION began to be ſo barefaced in this country, that it was high time for ſome gentlemen of independent fortunes to reſiſt it, not only to reſtore honeſt men to the power of ſerving their country, but to reſcue the character of the nation, it became neceſſary to give immediate indications, that there were ſtill left in it a regard to liberty and integrity.

From the long acquieſcence of independent men, it began to ſpread an alarm among our old allies, that the people were actually loſt.—The ſame idea made our enemies bold and hardy to interpoſe in our diſputes with our colonies, regarding England as a country ſurrendered to the arms of venality.

In a very comprehenſive tour, I have been tortured to hear what notions of venality were generally affixed to the character of the repreſentatives. From theſe conſiderations I firſt ventured to give, and ſo repeatedly urged, the neceſſity of a confederacy to animate and mutually ſupport a cauſe ſo eſſential to the exiſtence of the kingdom; and I am at laſt happy to ſee the efforts of a feeble pen ſucceeded by the firſt abilities in England; and even whilſt I ſtood ſingle and unſup-

unſupported, yet I perſiſted, and from deſpondency of any change in an anvil-hearted miniſter, from a certainty that the preſent members could not ſeparate from him, I recommended a plan of a ſettled and permanent nature; to overcome an evil ſo obſtinate, ſuch a plan and perſeverance ſeemed eſſential; petitions, unſupported by ſtanding aſſociations, would have evaporated in a ſingle vote, and left the miniſter poſſeſſed of the field. But, from your preſent general ſyſtem, and repeated efforts, I cannot harbour ſo mean an opinion of the miniſter, as to think he will continue his inattention to the complaint of the people, or ſo laviſh as he has hitherto been of their money; neither will his ſecretary, though ſcarce poſſeſſed of an underſtanding ſuperior to the drudgery of office, be ſo raſh as to write his circular letters, to intimidate or corrupt the the minds of the electors; for the vigilance of well-choſen committees will be able to detect ſuch attempts, and conſequently drag him out as an object of public reſentment.

I ſhall expect to hear of no more affidavits of thouſands of the public money being ſquandered away, as was the caſe proved on Mr. Robinſon in the town of Saltaſh. Theſe are conſequences not a little favourable to the people, and are juſtly to be inferred from

the preſent aſſociations; and faſhion will aſſiſt to carry on what reaſon has begun.

At this juncture every right is of conſequence; juſt as the proudeſt ſtructures collect ſtrength from the ſmalleſt pebbles. The ſerpent of ſeduction long crept, at laſt erected in full length, ſpit defiance in the face of the people. The miniſter is not able to contradict the aſſertion; on the contrary, in his ſolitary hours, he muſt acknowledge it, and abhor the proſtitution that has been made at his ſhrine, by the firſt families in England.

Neither would it ſurprize me to hear, as the aſſociations collect ſtrength, that ſome leading Tories, conſcious of the miſchief they have done, and fearful of their heads, ſhould take flight, and fix in Sicily, where nature will entertain them with an emblem of that diſtraction their principles conſtantly make in England; an emblem perpetually kept up with the elements that form an atmoſphere of ſnow; and the vigorous efforts of a mountain, whoſe fire is inextinguiſhable. The conteſt forms a monſter in nature, and their politics might receive conſolation from it.

LETTER XXV.

THE miniſter's meaſures have fixed in the minds of the American, almoſt without a ſingle exception, paſſion the moſt implacable, and hatred the moſt envenomed. All his attempts to negotiate, ſhew this to be proof moſt inconteſtible. Though his plans were originally arbitrary, yet in late ſtages of their execution, he has changed them for the moſt humiliating tone, and diſgrace and refuſals have been the reſult of whatever comes from him. Therefore, if peace is the object of England, the miniſter has convinced you, it is not in his power to accompliſh it, if millions are voted to carry on a ſplendid war. Your treaſure is exhauſted, and you purchaſe your own diſgrace.

From the teſtimony given at the bar by the military, it fully appears, that the utmoſt force you have employed againſt America, has been unequal to its ſubjection; and yet before this evidence was publickly given, though previouſly poſſeſſed by the miniſter, he has encouraged you to hope for ſucceſs, juſt to impoſe on your credulity, and continue longer in office.

As

As the learned Gentleman, who was unable to fathom thoſe bitter waters which baffled his profound calculation, when he took feet for inches; in the ſame manner the miniſter is continually loſt in his calculation, and out of his depth.

At laſt, preſſed by events moſt fatal and deciſive, he has complained of miſconduct in the men he has employed to execute his meaſures, and has called himſelf unfortunate, when he was appointed to the important places he ſtill poſſeſſes. I will tell him, why he has been unfortunate, and obliged to complain of miſconduct: he has purſued notions totally abhorrent to the genius of England; he has totally oppoſed the counſels, and rejected the example left by Mr. Pitt. To execute plans of the utmoſt conſequence, that great Patriot never referred to a parliamentary liſt; for to pleaſe indigent courtiers, or men of family, made no part of his ſyſtem; and as his choice of men was judicious, his meaſures were ſucceſsful. But this plan being free from venality and intrigue, has been inadmiſſible to the preſent miniſter, becauſe it requires reſolution to reſiſt application coming from families of intereſt. But where is his boaſted fortitude, when the guard of his conſcience is thus beaten down? His friends, in his excuſe, ſay, he is a man of piety: perhaps they will

ſay,

ſay, he has read in ſcripture, that the wiſe men were fortunately conducted by the ſtar that appeared in the Eaſt. He expected that the appearance of his ſtars in the Weſt, would have had the ſame good effect: therefore he complains of miſconduct, and blames his unlucky ſtars.

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LETTER XXVI.

To Sir GEORGE SAVILLE *and Lord* BEAUCHAMP, *on a Motion made relative to Debtors.*

IN every circle of life, there are men ſo elated with the good things of the day, that it is not uncommon to hear them talk of the unfortunate with but little ſenſibility, if not contempt, not conſidering how many evils lurk under the manſion of the proudeſt roof, and how ſoon its inhabitants might be added to the number of thoſe very deſpiſed fellow creatures. This inſenſibility in ſtations of the moſt exalted and affluent, is the only reaſon to be aſſigned, why the Gothic cuſtom of impriſoning for debt has continued to the preſent moment of refinement; for in ruder ages, deſtruction of thoſe who fell victims to power and avarice, marked their want of ſenſibility and fellow-feeling. As manners became more poliſhed, and ſociety was rendered more conducive to cheriſh the principles of humanity, the laws in moſt reſpects were framed to check the gratification of revenge, and yet in caſes of debt, they have permitted it to have a ſway and dominion, that can neither be reconciled

ciled to the clemency of refined ſociety, or the humane and merciful principles of Chriſtianity. In caſes of debt, a fellow creature, however honeſt or pure in his morals, is condemned to ſpend the remainder of his life in the company of the moſt profligate, removed from the ſervice of his country, the poſſibility of doing juſtice to his creditors, or miniſtering comfort to his family. In ſuch caſes the law becomes a tyrant, it arms revenge againſt the unfortunate citizen, who is condemned to a civil death, more painful than a natural one, becauſe more lingering. And for what purpoſes; and to pleaſe whom is this ſeverity exerciſed? Let us caſt a view on thoſe who generally fill the principal apartments in gaol. You will find extravagancy and inadvertency have brought on the cataſtrophe. Extravagance, cheriſhed by the moſt deſigning of mankind, often the uſurer himſelf, who begins by encouragement of the unthinking man in his firſt ſetting out, and in the laſt ſtage of his career, never fails to end with oppreſſing him.

The wretch who enjoys the plunder of the wreck, his own ſeducing arts firſt helped to bring on the rock of deſtruction, is not content with the laſt plank, but, puſhed by avarice and tyranny of temper, is happy to drag the unfortunate to gaol. Review the

two characters, one for want of foreſight, and for having a ſpirit of generoſity, is unprovided with the means of ſelf-defence; the other, by being deep and artful in his dealings, bids defiance to law, and frequently violates it with impunity. And ſhall the unfortunate, becauſe he has once fallen a victim to the ſnares of the world, be for ever deprived of the chance of correcting his conduct, and be deprived of liberty for life? What ſay the arguments urged in favour of this ſevere and mercileſs law? They ſay, it is a check to folly and vice, and a remedy for thoſe engaged in commerce. The inſufficiency of theſe arguments experience has evidently ſhewn, and the ſmall benefit ariſing from the practice they are brought to defend, expoſes the abſurdity of it. Behold the number of thoſe who fall into gaol, and then decide, whether poiſons can deter when there are ſo many ſnares to ſeduce human nature into error and miſery. Behold the effects produced by a gaol! here the hearts of men become callous; folly is changed for wickedneſs, and the man who firſt goes into priſon, void of art and a dupe, comes out often fully finiſhed in the principles of villainy; ſo that a gaol is a ſeminary of vice. Laſtly, in regard to its being a remedy for thoſe in trade, let us conſider the effects of the Engliſh and Dutch juriſ-

prudence

prudence with reſpect to debt; in the former, the gaols are generally full; and by fictitious bail and other arts, a gaol becomes no ſafeguard to traders, whilſt, frequently for want of hands, commerce is carried on at a very enormous expence, which becomes deſtructive to both the buyer and ſeller. In Holland there is a palliative medium between the creditor and debtor, which, by aſſigning the effects of the latter, ſecures his liberty, and without the terror of impriſonment for life; commerce flouriſhes, and every advantage is poſſeſſed to acquire and ſecure its fruits.

LETTER XXVII.

THE preſent conjuncture is one of the moſt awful England has ſeen, ſince the people met in that celebrated field, where an obſtinate king was made ſenſible, that they who had, from moderation of temper, firſt petitioned for redreſs, wanted neither ſenſe nor firmneſs to obtain it, when obliged to change humility and prayer for an exertion of thoſe powers of the mind.—Every modern event, for ſome years paſt, prove the value of that exertion, and at the ſame time develop the tendency of the preſent miniſter's deſigns, which have, year after year, collected ſtrength from the acquieſcence of the people, till force and clearneſs could be no longer refuſed to conviction, credit, and certainty taken from facts: and the majority of the people agreeing in opinion of dangers menacing their country, firmly reſolved to try the chance of a petition.—The general concurrence of your ſentiments have formed the ſubſtance of your petition: and it could not have been more united in ſpirit, or better combined in its nature—had you, in one body, aſſembled in the famous field between Windſor and Staines, where MAGNA CHARTA was ſigned. Sir George

George Saville, and others of great landed property, whoſe characters are out of the reach of cenſure, poſſeſſing every good quality that can attach the affection of fellow-ſubjects, has ſtood by you with firmneſs, and ſupported your petition with judgment and eloquence.

To a petition made in ſuch moderate, yet expreſſive terms, coming from ſo decided a majority of the people, if not a remedy, yet ſome conſolation would have been applied by a miniſter, whoſe heart did not delight in diſcord, and even rebellion itſelf, as hiſtory tells us one of Lord N—th's anceſtors did. It has been rejected by the miniſter, and in a manner very irritating and inſulting on thoſe who were intitled, from their own conſequence, and the importance of their complaint, to have met with reſpect, though redreſs, agreeably to his ideas, was unattainable. But to provoke ſeems to be his deſign; and every man of common ſenſe ſhould regard it as contrived to force the people from a temper of moderation with which they have hitherto, and, I truſt, in their wiſdom, will continue to direct every ſtep they might take, and remain at the ſame time unpalled in a ſtruggle that will do them immortal honour, and reſcue a great country from the ſnares of an artful, unfeeling, and arbitrary miniſter. In that very

exalted

exalted capacity, few men in the world would have turned their backs on a moſt favourable occaſion to diffuſe harmony, after diſcord had been ſo long torturing the ears, and diſtracting the ſenſes of the nation. But the fallen angel, even in the agonies of diſgrace, preferred diſcord and dominion in hell, to the ſweets of rational ſervice in heaven.

The finger of a child might point the application. I ſhall therefore proceed to obſerve, that had the miniſter complied with your requeſts, for the future, he and his ſucceſſors would have been compelled to court the approbation of the people, and would have been forced to act with integrity, had he been once ſtripped of all thoſe little penſioned myrmidons, who are at preſent cheriſhed and protected, in order to carry on a ſyſtem of dark, wicked corruption. Refuſing to take that line of conduct, Lord North's character is fixed in colours no panegyric can ever be able to brighten, or prejudice add a ſingle ſhade to; though by his rejecting the voice of the people, and without any reſerve, declaring his determination not to be moved by it, he has thereby left you to make a ſtruggle that is moſt arduous, yet it will be proportionally honourable; and from even a temporary defeat, you have collected eſſential advantages. From the miniſter's

refuſal

refuſal to give you the names of his penſioned friends, yet you are able to find out their principles, and without being able to fix any ſpecific ſum oppoſite to each penſioner and hireling, yet you are no longer ſtrangers to the motives by which a very conſiderable number of perſons who are called erroneouſly repreſentatives, have dared to fly in the face of an injured kingdom. From the meetings held in the different counties, and from the queſtion lately propoſed by Sir George Saville, the principles of every man in the kingdom are detected, and might be as clearly aſcertained as it is well underſtood; the needle, after it has been once touched, will continue to point to the North. To this circumſtance of conviction you might add another: it is now clear that the character of Herod is no longer fabulous; it is reſcued from doubts, and realized by a miniſter who calls himſelf a Chriſtian, exhibiting two of that Herod's qualities, who could torture and yet inſinuate. The people can teſtify the practice of the former; the confidence of the Sovereign ſhews the latter. Herod was well received at court with his addreſs, even by the mild and virtuous Auguſtus, yet his cruelty will for ever be a model to the moſt envenomed tyrant: you ſhould, therefore, be doubly guarded, and fix on proper candidates immediately to fill

up

up your counties and other places of repreſentation. When ſo great a queſtion was loſt by a majority of two votes, you ſhould conſider, the partition between liberty and prerogative is but thin, and ſhould a majority of penſioners and placemen be again returned in par——t, thoſe very men, before the end of the ſeven years, will moſt certainly vote for a ſtanding army, in order to protect themſelves and champion. Modern and ancient hiſtory tell us, whenever a ſtanding army has been admitted, every root of liberty has been torn up, and the land where it once throve, like the land of Lot, has been curſed with perpetual barrenneſs—learn from the fall of others to preſerve yourſelves; ſelf-preſervation is the firſt law.

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LETTER XXVIII.

EVERY admonition of paſt iniquity, a diſplay of future rewards and puniſhments, have been exerted to awaken the fears, or excite the feelings of remorſe in a dying parliament.—All in vain—ſo that it becomes viſible to every villager, by the late behaviour of that wicked body, that till the corruptible puts on incorruptibility, it will be in vain to expect from it a ſingle act of juſtice, a ſingle idea of remorſe. Repentance is awful, but cannot intimidate the hearts of thoſe virtue has not been able to attract, or animate to a life of integrity. Of this, you have by your petitions acquired a proof, that is not more melancholy than convincing; inaſmuch ſo, that every independent man in the nation is but too ſenſible that the alliance between Lord North, venality and parliament, is not to be diſſolved by the voice of petitions, however pathetic; and that till the laſt trump ſounds, no ſalvation can be expected, no hopes entertained of a change, where the whole maſs ſeems to be infected with the liquid of gold, which, like a poiſonous juice, has both penetrated and corrupted it. Seeing plainly this to be the caſe, where is the man ſo loſt to the noble

and irreſiſtible fire, which warmed your anceſtors in Renne Mead? Where is there an Engliſhman, who will not be exalted in his thoughts, whenever he might tread on that ſacred ground, and with ſenity and fortitude, attempt a noble ſtruggle, from which a deciſive change might crown your ardour, or for the future, take from you the pain of diſappointment, by firſt depriving you of the means of expectation?

Arguments have been exerted, humility aſſumed, and the nerves of eloquence ſtrained to ſave you. All has been in vain. There is a ſomething, an impediment to your happineſs. I fear there is a heart of flint that defies application, at leaſt made in the terms he imagines, you dare not change for thoſe more full, ample, and explicit.

Mercy, I fear, will not enrich the veins of that man; as ſoon might you expect to hear that the barren ſands of Arabia are bleſſed with beauty and vegetation, as to diſcover ſo great a revolution.

It is obvious to foreigners, as well as natives, that the miniſter, who ought to regard every moment as critical, devotes his time to the greateſt levity; that, while all men approach him in his rides with faces full of thought, he is ſeemingly void of the ſmalleſt impreſſion of concern or reflection. It is come

come to a point—to retire with inſult and contempt tacked to your petitions; give up your powers of obtaining redreſs; reſign all that is dear to a ſet of wicked, unprincipled men; or of aſſerting, by ſome inequivocal act, that you are ſerious, and reſolved to try, whether the rights of Engliſhmen are to be realiſed, or whether they are only to be read in venerable papers, juſt to create deſires the conſtitution does not allow you to gratify, either to end ſtruggles and harangues with Lord North, or, byſpirited actions, defy the force Lord Bute has ſubmitted to his late ſecretary Jenkinſon, at preſent Secretary of War. You are now to prove, who are the people; that they are, or are not.

It has been lately ſaid, there is no ſuch man as a favorite, no ruling miniſter. Should it come out that there is no people, what will be left—but juſt to pay a ſtanding army, and ſupport a grand monarch? And, becauſe you cannot indulge Lord Stormont with the preſence of a little culprit at the bar, agree that at the bar of reaſon, in the hearts of Engliſhmen, there can be no proof, or conviction. What, becauſe the people of Liſbon, when the earthquake involved the town in diſtreſs and calamity, were ignorant whether the cauſe was ſimple or mixed, that produced the miſchief, can it be ſaid there was

no trembling of the earth; that all was imaginary? Becauſe it is not known, whether Lord Bute, North, or Another, have been the cauſe of your preſent political ſhock, are you to give up the evidence of the ſenſes, renounce the cauſe of liberty, and bow, like the French, whom you deſpiſe as a nation, to an idol?

☞ This is the laſt letter during the late parliament.

LETTER

LETTER XXIX.

To the Citizens of London.

LORD North's nomenclators declare Mr. Sawbridge to be one of the moſt formidable of thoſe Gentlemen whoſe zeal and incorruptible ſpirit of integrity have produced them on all occaſions, for many years ſince, to face difficulties, though great and trying, and to reſiſt attacks on the rights of the people by whomſoever made. The ſame decided opinion would afford joy to the patrons of corruption, by confirming the excluſion of Mr. Sawbridge from parliament; and the ſame reaſon that would ſuggeſt this as a matter of joy to them, ought to excite you to ſupport him. Victory to the miniſter is defeat to the citizens of induſtry and integrity; for the ſame rancorous opinion that has attempted to aſſaſſinate Mr. Sawbridge's character, has for ſome years paſt been undermining that of the city of London.

Theſe wicked aims have conſtantly appeared in the conduct of the miniſtry ſince you approached the throne with prayer and remonſtrance, and went ſo far in your zeal as to erect to Mr. Beckford a monument of his

fidelity

fidelity to his country, in having dared to tell the King truth, even at the palace, and in the midſt of the very men whoſe conduct was the ſubject of complaint. But if, Gentlemen, you repent of your paſt exertions, and now think that firmneſs and integrity are no longer required in the repreſentatives of the city; that the miniſter is able and willing to ſupport the commercial and civil rights of England; that from the inſtances already given in Mr. Sawbridge's behaviour, he is no longer to be truſted with the power of oppoſing an honeſt and patriotic miniſter; then in this caſe, ſuch being the fatal change of your hearts, chuſe ſome timid, yet artful man, who might amaſs a great fortune to himſelf, and give you as little trouble as the borough of Sarum has for many years paſt received from their unknown members.

Erect Lord Bute's ſtatue in the room of Mr. Beckford's, and at one deciſive blow annihilate all ſtruggles between liberty and prerogative, and by ſuch a luſcious ſacrifice glut the appetite of contractors and placemen, who have long ſtruggled in vain to put an end to thoſe checks, and that vigilant attention Mr. Sawbridge and others have wickedly made againſt their graſping deſigns to riſe upon the ruins of their country. This is the alternative of acting uniformly upright,

upright, or wantonly treacherous to all principles of virtue and ſound policy. I could proceed, but my good opinions of your intentions ſtop me in making the parallel; and it will, I truſt, convince all England that you are as zealous as you have been always ſincere in the diſcharge of your function of the great duty of the citizens of London; and that your choice of Mr. Sawbridge will be made with redoubled ardour, to convince the miniſter it was inadvertency, and not deſign; it was over ſecurity in your hopes, and not the wantonneſs of party, that ſuffered Mr. Sawbridge to be rejected from your ſervice; thus holding out a deliberative conduct, equally full of diſcernment and conſiſtency; an awful check to a wicked miniſter, and an amiable example to the reſt of England.

In forming a juſt idea of a Gentleman's political principles and abilities, the ſtandard of perfection is too lofty to be touched by any man living, therefore a fair compariſon of one man with another ſhould fix your approbation. According to this rule, Mr. Sawbridge ſtands among the moſt brilliant public characters, and is worthy of your encouragement, to keep the ſpirit of patriotiſm from languiſhing. Whilſt ſuch Gentlemen of fortune are ready to give up the ſweets of retirement, or reſiſt the temptation

of

of being reſpected at the levee of the King or the miniſter for your ſervice, the citizens of London ſhould be above ſinking into moderation, and be vigilant to defeat little dark canvaſſing, croſs the appetite of venality, and by rendering juſtice to themſelves cheriſh the word patriot, which placemen and contractors, hireling writers and tories, endeavour to baniſh out of ſociety, juſt as the moſt blaſphemous atheiſt, in order to act without check or controul, pretends to deny the exiſtence of God.

☞ This is the firſt letter in the preſent parliament.

LETTER

LETTER XXX.

To the Author of a Letter addreſſed to Sir GEORGE SAVILLE.

SIR,

YOUR enthuſiaſtic love for your country I admire, and therefore lament that you ſhould have in any the ſmalleſt innuendo cenſured Sir George Saville, for having declared a ſpirit of deſpair from the preſent difficulties which ſtand in the way to reformation. You ſeem to argue as if he had not been guided by manly deductions of reaſon, but effeminate motives of acquieſcence.—— You are totally miſtaken; that great and amiable man has devoted his whole life in the ſervice of his country, and the ſtruggle he has made for ſo many years proving ineffectual, juſtify his deſpair, though no man to the lateſt hour exerts himſelf more to eſtabliſh a degree of purity in the legiſlature. But, Sir, as you ſeem to think ſome experiment ſhould be made to collect the general ſenſe of the people, I recommend it to you, and rely on your zeal to call a meeting within a month in Renne-Mead, to bring your ſpeculative plan to a criterion. Should you either decline the popular exertion of natural liberty, or the people at large, be

averſe to attend on the ſummons, to add brilliancy to the throne, and proſperity to themſelves. You muſt give up all future addreſſes to Sir George on his preſent deſpair. My former letters during the laſt parliament plainly prove, how ſtrongly I have cheriſhed a ſpirit of a very contrary nature, and though I ſtill place much confidenee in the zeal of the aſſociated counties, yet I cannot hope for immediate reformation that will be general and concluſive. Permit me to obſerve, your hopes, however animating, flow from an unadulterated ſpring of primitive nature, which I fear you will not find at preſent in England. At the ſame time, every exertion is laudable that might purge it from the droſs and polluted matter which ſuffocates it. You will be pleaſed to obſerve, if nature in its purity claims its rights, ſecond nature will, with a power equal, if not ſuperior, defend its acquired privileges, and conſidering what is the force of habit and faſhion in framing the mind of man, you will find Sir George has too much reaſon for his deſpondency. And this is but too well proved from what has lately paſſed in a certain mixed aſſembly. The miniſter has given you an open teſtimony of his ſuperiority over the nation, and how lightly he holds its approbation. That a feather from the treaſury is able to outweigh all your

power

power and arguments however ſolid. Sir Richard Sutton was fixed on to contend againſt Mr. Fox, and the little treaſury member was able to convince a great majority, and fixed it againſt all the eloquence of that great man, whoſe knowledge was ſufficient to enlighten a whole nation, however involved in the moſt ſavage ignorance; but had Mr. Locke himſelf been living, he would not have been able to reaſon againſt little Sir Richard, whoſe ſpeech might be a fair epitome of a little cabinet, but a very melancholy vehicle of the ſenſe of a nation, called on too with a pretended view of collecting its general ſenſe, when it is notorious, that every act and ſtratagem was uſed to deprive it of the means of giving its ſenſe, or any opinion at all, but what was extorted in the dark.

The people were taken by ſurprize, whilſt the enemies of the ſtate, contractors, and clerks, were prepared with qualifications and other amunition from the treaſury to defeat the ſenſe of the people, when, Sir, I am obliged to look on Sir Richard Sutton's ſpeech, or that made by Mr. Ellis, the minor political Gilrig of the two, as the ſenſe of the nation, and ſee a general acquieſcence enſue; no addreſſes made to his Majeſty to convince him of the real and general ſenſe of the people.

I join

I join with Sir George Saville in deſpair, and pronounce, that ſome events of a great convulſive nation can alone awaken the people; ſuch as that effected by Charles the Fifth, who from an Emperor became a friar; he has ſet an example to other princes to quit the graſp of an imaginary world, and retire within the bound of a Convent.—Deſpair in one has, and might ſtill, cure the effects of it in thouſands.

As for the Duke of Richmond's plan, it carries in it a degree of wiſdom and ſtability, to add a rafter of lignum vitæ to a free and rational conſtitution, and among other bleſſings, it might one day be received as a compenſation to our ſucceſſors for the loſſes and want of unanimity, the influence of Lord Bute has effected to ſuch an extent (though he does not ſee it, as he ſays) that the nation is brought from the moſt pleaſing hopes of enjoyment, to languiſh and deprecate impending ruin.

FINIS.

BRITISH MUSEUM

ERRATUM.

In the 18th letter read, to reject or ſupport meaſures cordially.